INTERPRETERS AND FIXERS IN CONFLICT ZONES: THE EXAMPLES OF IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INDEX OF TABLES

1. ABSTRACT

Interpreters in zones of conflict are far from being a new phenomenon. Historical accounts and various authors have not shown much interest for this type of interpreters, but there are newer reports that provide previously unattended information about them. Although they generally remain invisible to many historical accounts, and not much has been written about them, their historical importance is undeniable. Whether referred to as interpreters, fixers, linguists or otherwise, they are described by a certain terminology that provides their definition and their functions. In this research project, we analyze the definitions of the terms interpreter and fixer, as well as a wide range of subjects that revolve around them. We compare what different primary and secondary, academic and non-academic, sources and authors have said about interpreters and fixers and the different subjects that relate to them. There are a range of subjects revolving around interpreters and fixers in conflict zones: their role across history, the dangers they face, their motivations to accept such a job, their alleged role of neutrality, the ethical/moral aspect of their profession, the narratives and identity that are associated to them, training programs to improve their working conditions, and their presence in the modern warfare scenarios of Afghanistan and Iraq. Our goal in this research project is to analyze and compare what the different authors have said on this subject, in order to draw our own conclusions and attempt to identify some patterns.

2. INTRODUCTION

Let us begin this research project by pointing out the two main premises that multiple authors that we investigated have agreed upon. Authors such as M. Baker (2010), Askew and Salama-Carr (2010), Ruiz Rosendo and Barea Muñoz (2017), Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud (2016), Fontan and Palmer (2007), Allen (2012), Baigorri (2011), Rafael (2007), Henchman (2016), Bali and Moser-Mercer (2018), and Kahane (2007) have consistently pointed out two basic premises that relate to the research of interpreters in conflict zones.

The first premise being that there is a generalized lack of information about interpreters in conflict zones. The second premise is that war has remained the rule, rather than the exception, throughout human history. Since war requires interpreters, and war has remained pervasive across history and will likely continue to be in the future as well, so has the need for interpreters in the past and in the future. These two premises lay the groundwork for the various topics that we are going to deal with in this research project.

Regarding the first premise, we have found that few accounts have been written about interpreters and fixers in conflict zones. According to Baker (2010), scholarly research has not shown much interest on the subject of interpreters in conflict zones. As Baker describes it (2010, p.202): "Translators and interpreters are largely invisible in existing accounts of war. The figure of the interpreter is usually on the margins". Similarly, Ruiz Rosendo and Barea Muñoz (2017), as well as Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud (2016), argue that the figure of the interpreter in conflict is widely ignored by academia, both in the present and in the past. The previous authors point out that the literature available on subject mostly focuses on interpreters in the recent Middle Eastern conflicts. Meanwhile, Askew and Salama-Carr (2010) agree that despite there being a growing interest in the last few years in the role of interpreters in conflict zones, interpreters on the ground are still largely unrecognized. Additionally, Ruiz Rosendo and Barea Muñoz (2017) point out that interpreters and fixers in conflicts zones are usually invisible because their role isn't recognized. Focusing exclusively on fixers, Fontan and Palmer (2007, p.6) claim that "they have not been the subject of academic commentary, and although they are far from a new phenomenon little has been written about them in any context." As Allen (2012) describes, despite placing themselves at great psychological and physical risk, fixers are largely unknown, mostly because they work in isolation and are not in the spotlight of attention. However, all of the previous authors agree that despite their lack of recognition and lack of literature on the subject, there is a growing interest on the role of interpreters and fixers in conflict zones.

Regarding the second premise, we have found that war has remained as the rule, rather than the exception throughout the history of humankind. Since international war demands interpreters, and war has remained pervasive in history and will likely continue in the future, so will the need for interpreters. As Baigorri (2003, 2010) explains, there almost

always seems to be a sense of surprise when war and conflict erupt and there is a sudden urgent need for interpreters. In war, the use of language and interpreters is used as a weapon in order to control the media within the conflict. For this reason, war creates the sudden demand for interpreters, since language is often a key aspect on the road to victory. Rafael (2007) agrees with the previous authors and explains that translation and other linguistical factors are essential in the warring context. Translation serves as a tool of surveillance, in other to hear and understand what the enemy may say in a foreign language. This author explains how the great empires of history used translation and interpreters as an instrument of power in order to control colonial and conquered territories. Meanwhile, Inghilleri (2010) describes that the nature of war creates the classical friend/enemy division, the 'us' and 'them' distinction that is often caused by language as well as many other factors. In the warring context, language and culture play an enormous role that has to be fulfilled by interpreters. Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud (2016, 2018) add to the previous by saying that conflict between groups of humans has always involved the role of the interpreter as a cultural and linguistical mediator, mostly through untrained interpreters, also known as fixers. Bali and Moser-Mercer (2018) and Kahane (2007) sum up in agreement with all the aforementioned authors by saying that war and conflict go far beyond cultural and linguistical boundaries, reason for which interpreters are needed. Bali and Moser-Mercer (2018), Baker (2010) and Henchman (2016) go a bit more into specifics and explain that in conflict zones, interpreters have played a significant part in intelligence activities throughout history, currently playing a crucial role in the War Against Terror in the context of Iraq and Afghanistan and also in other countries.

2.1. MOTIVATION

In terms of geopolitics, ideology, culture, diplomacy, security, and language, the Middle East region remains a relevant field of study. As discussed by the different authors throughout this research project, war and interpreting/translation go together. The Middle East remains one of the most conflictive regions in the world. As of 2018, the Global Peace Index marks countries like Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Syrian Arab Republic among the top

five most conflictive, or least peaceful, countries in the world, together with South Sudan and Somalia. Various authors mentioned in this investigation, such as Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud (2016), Henchman (2016), Inghilleri (2010), Baker (2010), and Kahane (2007) claim that as long as there is conflict or war, there will be interpreters and translators filling the linguistic and cultural gaps, especially in international protracted wars like those currently taking place in the Middle East.

All that is mentioned in the previous paragraph is part of the academic field of study, International Relations and Translation and Interpreting, that drove us to choose this topic. The 'conflict' or the 'war' related content in this project is closely intertwined with the field of International Relations, while the interpreter related content is closely associated with the Translation and Interpreting field. Therefore, with this topic of investigation, both fields of expertise are covered to a certain extent.

2.2. OBJECTIVES

The main object of this research project is to dive into the role of the interpreter in zones of conflict. Our goal is to better understand the nature and working environment of this profession. In order to do so, we will take a look into a number of subjects that relate to the profession of the interpreter in zones of conflict.

The first main objective of this work is to clarify the terminological difference that exists in this field of expertise. Terms such as interpreter, fixer, stringer, linguist do not necessarily mean the same thing in different texts. Additionally, we want to make the separation between 'national' and 'local' interpreters, which are also two entirely different categories of interpreters. These terms might overlap and in certain occasions be used in an interchangeable manner, which would be erroneous. Therefore, a substantial part of this investigation will have the mission of drawing the line between such terms as clearly as possible and use them accordingly. In other words, the first main objective is about clearing the 'definitions' and 'functions' of this type of interpreters.

The second main objective of this work is to examine all the secondary aspects that relate to interpreters in conflict zones that are not related to a strict function or definition with the aim of understanding the dangers they face, their motivations, their historical and present role, their ethical and moral conflicts, how the outsider (foreign militaries and international media) and the local population perceive them etc.

2.3. METHODOLOGY

In this research project, we intend to study the subject of interpreters and fixers in conflict zones like Iraq and Afghanistan through the following method. First, by establishing a theoretical framework in which we divide the cited authors and sources into four main categories: (1) primary & academic sources, (2) secondary & academic sources, (3) primary & non-academic sources, and (4) secondary & non-academic sources. In this section, we explain why each category is important and relevant to our research. Second, by establishing a theoretical framework in which we will deal with a number of aspects. Within this section we define and list the main functions of interpreters and fixers. We also cover the following recurrent themes that relate to interpreters and fixers in conflict zones: the historical background of interpreters and fixers in conflict zones, the dangers that they face on the field, their alleged neutrality, the motivations behind their decision to interpret, the ethics and morality aspect, the narratives and identity that are associated to them, and some training and professionalization programs. Additionally, we dig deep into the modern warfare examples of Iraq and Afghanistan and how interpreters and fixers play a role in those conflicts. Third, by carrying out a comparative analysis between the information provided by the different sources and authors. In this section, we divide the authors and sources into tables according to the different categories of the theoretical framework. In the tables we mark with 'Xs' the common themes that the authors have mentioned, we compare what they say in contrast to each other, and ultimately attempt to make observations, draw some patterns, and eventually come up with some conclusions from that analysis.

Our methodological approach is qualitative, rather than quantitative, since we are comparing the views and information provided by different authors. We conducted research for

this project throughout the year 2018, and we made sure to provide some variety between primary/secondary and academic/non-academic sources in order to gain a wider perspective on the subject. In addition to the written documents, research papers, and websites used, we also conducted an interview with an anonymous interpreter who worked on the ground in Afghanistan.

3. STATE OF AFFAIRS

In our research, we have found a lack of sources dealing with the issue of interpreters and fixers in conflict zones. We were surprised that, considering the fact that there is a wide range of academic information available in the translation and interpreting fields of expertise, a topic as interesting and currently relevant as the issue of interpreters and fixers in conflict zones is not extensively covered by academic sources. Many of the authors we consulted mention the fact that there is a general lack of interest, research, and information available on interpreters in conflict zones. Most of the information available online is mostly secondary and appears in non-academic sources like newspaper articles, that mostly deal with the humanitarian aspect of interpreters in conflict zones. There are far fewer primary and academic sources that cover the issue of interpreters of conflict zones, the literature is scarce, and on many cases does not go too much into depth or detail. We have also found disparity and inconsistency on many of the sources, since some authors use the terms translator, interpreter, and fixer as if they were interchangeable concepts.

Taking into consideration the lack of available information on the matter, we have been forced to use a wide variety of sources. We have compiled information from newspaper articles, magazine journals, think-tanks, non-governmental organizations, books, an interview, and research documents written by university professors and investigators who work in translation and interpreting faculties. We consider that, despite not all sources we used are primary and academic sources, they are all pertinent because they contribute to report on different aspects that were all relevant to our research. For the purpose of differentiating them, however, we have decided to divide the compiled sources into four main categories: (1) primary and academic; (2) secondary and academic; (3) primary and non-academic; (4) secondary and non-academic.

The first category of sources used were sources that were both primary and academic. The first example is that of author Jerry Palmer (2007), who worked on the field with Iraqi interpreters on the ground, and wrote the first section for Myriam Salama-Carr's book, *Trans-*

lating and Interpreting Conflict, which goes by the title of "*Interpreters and Translators in the Frontline: Interpreting and Translation for Western Media in Iraq*". Palmer deals with various themes surrounding the role of interpreters and fixers in Iraq post 2003, focusing on those who work for Western (especially British-American) media and militaries. The second example is the IEEE[1] document written by Amir Miri (2014), who worked on the ground in Afghanistan as an interpreter for ISAF troops and also for the Spanish armed forces. Miri talks about his experience working on the ground with ISAF forces, and deals with various themes such as the role of interpreters in armed conflict, the nature of Afghanistan as a conflict zone, winning the hearts and minds of the local Afghan population, the Afghan language and culture challenge etc.

The second category of sources used were those sources that secondary and academic sources. This is the category for which we mostly used researches who work for different universities in the fields of translation and interpreting. The main references that we used for this category were Ruiz Rosendo, Persaud, Barea Muñoz, Inghilleri, Harding, M. Baker, Maier, Baigorri, Hajjar, Rafael, Takeda, Askew & Salama-Carr, Stahuljak, Van Dijk, Soeters, Ridder, and C. Baker. In their first collaboration, Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud (2016) deal with the role of interpreters in conflict zones across history, from Ancient Summer and Ancient Egypt until the end of WWII and the Nuremberg Trials. In their second collaboration, Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud (2018) deal with the role of local interpreters working in peacekeeping operations, particularly focusing on the case of the Bosnian War. Meanwhile, Ruiz Rosendo and Barea Muñoz (2017) focus on defining the different subcategories of interpreters in conflict zones around the Middle East. M. Baker (2010) elaborates on a number of subjects, but mainly focuses on the narratives and identity that various actors associate to interpreters in conflict zones, and how the interpreters themselves participate in those narratives. In her collaboration with Maier, M. Baker (2011) deal with the ethical aspect of training interpreters and translators to work in conflict zones. Inghilleri has been one of the authors who has written the most about interpreters in conflict zones, dealing with a wide range of subjects on a number of documents. In her earliest research, Inghilleri (2003, 2005) deals with the role of mediation and positionality that interpreters often play

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[1] IEEE: Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos

in armed conflict, asylum seeking, NGOs etc. Later onward, Inghilleri (2008, 2010) goes into thorough detail about the motivations and moral/ethical aspect behind the job of interpreters in conflict zones, focusing on the case of Iraq and the various policies of the War On Terror as an example. In her collaboration with Harding, Inghilleri (2010) deals with a number of subjects, ranging from recent history of interpreters in the Cold War and in the 90s conflict in Africa and in the Balkans, to the narratives associated to them by multiple actors. Baigorri (2003, 2010) majorly deals with the history of interpreters across the 20th Century, in the context of the League of Nations, the Spanish Civil War, the Second World War, the Nuremberg Trials, the United Nations, the Cold War, and within the Soviet Union in particular. Hajjar (2016) writes about the relationship between military advisors and linguists (interpreters and fixers) in the context of the war in Iraq, divides the different interpreter subcategories, and lists the ideal competences that a good interpreter on the ground should have. Rafael (2007) also faces a wide range of themes related to the conflict zone interpreter, such as the colonial history of interpreting, the dangers that interpreters face in conflict zones, how interpreting is used as an instrument of power or as a tool to mediate, how local interpreters/fixers are not trusted and often considered traitors etc. Takeda (2009) offers a varied range of themes, such as the history of Japanese-American interpreters during WWII, the lack of trust toward interpreters that are of the same ethnic group as the enemy, their problem when it comes to the narratives and identity associated to them, the motivations that drive interpreters to carry out their job, their recruitment in places like Iraq and Afghanistan etc. Stahuljak (2000) deals with the witness testimonies given by interpreters in conflict zones, particularly focusing on the case of Croat interpreters during the Balkan War. In her interview with Salama-Carr, Askew (2011) treats the various obstacles and difficulties when it comes to working as an interpreter in a conflict zone. Van Dijk, Soeters, and Ridder (2010) use examples of various accounts of interpreters working with Dutch military personnel in Afghanistan to deduct some conclusions regarding the job interpreters in conflict zones. Finally, C. Baker (2010) proposes solutions to improve the situation of interpreters working in conflict zones, based on her research of interpreters in the peacekeeping operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The third category of sources used were those sources that are primary but non-academic. The first example is an interview that we carried out with an interpreter who preferred to

remain anonymous and who worked for the Spanish Ministry of Defense in Afghanistan from 2005 to 2014 and reported on his first-hand experience from nearly a decade. The interview with our anonymous interpreter deals with his personal experience in Afghanistan, and the various elements he observed in such a conflict zone. In that interview, our interpreter responds to a number of questions that deal with various themes surrounding interpreters in conflict zones. The second example is an article written by Monica Campbell (2011) for the Committee to Protect Journalists. Campbell worked directly with interpreters on the ground in Afghanistan during the time in which she wrote the article. In her article, Campbell focuses on describing various aspects related to fixers in Afghanistan.

The fourth category of sources we used were secondary and non-academic: a variety of articles written on newspapers, magazines, non-profit organizations, and associations. The newspaper and magazine articles we used were those written by George Packer (2009) for The New York Times, and by Andrew Sand (2012) for The New York Times. The articles we used that were written for non-profit organizations and associations were those written by Elizabeth Witchel (2004) for the Committee to Protect Journalists, by Barbara Moser-Mercer and Grégoire Bali (2018), and Eduardo Kahane (2007) for AIIC, by John Henchman (2016) for K-International, by Katharine Allen (2012) for Interpret America, and by the staff of the Red T organization. Witchel focuses on fixers, explaining who they are, what they do, the dangers that they face in Iraq, their role as journalists etc. Packer also focuses on the fixer figure, explaining the type of profile that a fixer usually is, the functions he carries out, his relationship to the foreign military or media correspondent etc. Sand explains how interpreters are key in the success of the American military mission in Afghanistan. Bali and Moser-Mercer explain the reasons for which interpreters are recruited in conflict zones like Iraq and Afghanistan, and also list some programs that are being put into practice in order to better train interpreters. Kahane mostly deals with the ethical and moral aspect of the interpreter profession in the context of a conflict zone, and how that relates to his alleged and often romanticized neutrality. Kahane also focuses on how local interpreters are often perceived to be traitors by his countrymen and consequently how that leads them to have to face multiple dangers. Henchman contributes to the historical background by focusing on a number of eras, from the Stone Age and the Spanish conquest of the American continent, to WWII and the Cold War and also joins other authors against the

10

argument of the alleged neutrality of interpreters. Allen also provides a contribution to a number of themes, from the recruitment of interpreters and the different subcategories of interpreters to the programs that are being put into practice to improve their situation. Finally, the Red T organization explains the different programs they are putting into practice along AIIC and FIT in order to improve the working conditions and rights of interpreters.

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1. DEFINITION OF TERMS AND MAIN FUNCTIONS

The first logical step of this research project would be to define the terminology that we have used in our work. Throughout this paper, especially when it comes to the Recurrent Themes section, we often mention both 'interpreters and fixers. The purpose of this section is to establish a definition for those terms and to set the parameters that differentiate them. Additionally, for each term we provided additional information and drawn a comparison of what other authors have said and described about both terms.

4.1.1. INTERPRETER

Hereinafter, we have produced our own definition of what an interpreter is, and provided specific examples, based on the information that we gathered from reading other authors.

Definition of an Interpreter: A national (Western citizen) or local (Afghan or Iraqi citizen) individual who has received professional formation as an interpreter; and is hired to carry out the function of interpreting for foreign correspondents or for the militaries of Western countries. A graduated or certified interpreter who acts out on his profession.

Example (National Interpreter): American citizen of Iraqi descent who has been born and raised in the United States. His parents are Iraqis who moved from Iraq to the U.S., therefore he is perfectly fluent in Arabic because it is his mother tongue. He studied translation and interpreting in the United States and became a certified interpreter. He is hired by the U.S. Army to translate in Iraq, his ancestor's country of origin, although he has never been there before.

Example (Local Interpreter): A local Afghan citizen who lives Kabul and has never travelled outside of his country. He learned English quickly by watching American movies and listening to American music. He studied Interpreting at Kabul University and became a certified interpreter. Following the American intervention in his country, he is hired by the U.S. army exclusively to provide interpreting services.

Our research to find the definition of what an interpreter is, led us to the work of Palmer (2007), Miri (2014), Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud (2018), Inghilleri (2010), Takeda (2009), Hajjar (2016), Baker (2010) and Baigorri (2011). The authors agree on the definition of the interpreter as an individual with professional training who carries out the function of interpreting in conflict zones like Afghanistan and Iraq. The interpreter having professional training as such is precisely what differentiates him from a fixer. While a fixer can take on additional roles, such as acting out as an intelligence gatherer, an informant, a mediator, a gatekeeper, a politically involved figure etc., a professional interpreter strictly acts out on his profession. To be more precise, unlike the fixer, an interpreter doesn't have any additional roles or missions aside from interpreting. According to Palmer (2007), the role of the interpreter is exclusively the role of that of a technical relay, whose function is to guarantee the exchange of information from one language to another. According to Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud (2018), the interpreter facilitates communication as he is able to speak both languages, interpret in both directions, and has the ability to cover a wide spectrum of topics that range from basic conversation to highly specialized themes. In other words, interpreters act as diplomats and mediators between different cultures and groups. Meanwhile, Miri (2014) describes the interpreter as he who covers all the acts of communication that arise out of a conflict zone. She claims that interpreters play a vital role because they are the bridge between peoples. She also explains that the interpreter is necessary for any situation on the ground that requires communication, transmitting the concepts and ideas of the military towards the local population and vice-versa. At the same time, Baigorri (2003) claims that an interpreter must fulfil a set of criteria in order to be considered one, such as knowing the languages that he is going to interpret and the culture in which the communication is taking place.

Additionally, we found that Palmer (2007) explains that in conflict zones, interpreters don't carry out word for word translation or interpreting, but rather a summary and synthesized version of what they hear. The reasons for this are: (A) that a lot of information they receive is simple straightforward information; (B) that a full translation would be lengthy and time-consuming, which could pose a danger or a hazard in a conflict scenario; (C) conversation in modern warfare conflicts involve languages like Arabic, Urdu, Pashtu, Dari etc., which are rich in cultural idioms, expressions, adornments, and detours, resulting in elaborate, even unclear messages.

Adding to what Palmer expressed in the previous paragraph, we found that Miri (2014) points out that there are instances in which the act of interpreting goes beyond the linguistic competence aspect. What is important is often not what is said, but what is expressed through culture, environment, religion, traditions etc. Interpreters often take on the role of interpreting cultural symbols, codes of social behavior, and often act as advisors if they perceive that it is better to act cautiously in a specific zone or moment. In this type of context, the interpreter assesses the immediate environment, knowing the language, the way of life of the locals, and the cultural and religious norms. According to Miri, the interpreter connects the foreign military with the local people. Therefore, aside from their impeccable command of two or more languages, the interpreter must have knowledge of local culture, dialects, social codes, sexual behavior codes etc. in order to gain trust and confidence from the local population. The exercise of being an interpreter in a conflict zone requires the sorting out of cultural obstacles, the knowledge of abilities that go beyond linguistic communication. Especially in highly religious societies like those of rural Afghanistan, having a knowledge of the Islamic religion and respecting sacred traditions like the hours of prayer shows humility and respect.

Lastly, we found that Inghilleri (2010), Miri (2014), Takeda (2009), Hajjar (2016), Baker (2010) and Baigorri (2011) add some additional information about the role of the interpreter in order to avoid confusion. Inghilleri claims that unlike fixers, interpreters aren't mediators, informants, intelligence gatherers, gatekeepers etc. However, she stresses that interpreters may be asked occasionally to take part in interrogations, raids, patrols, ambushes, bomb-clearance, and security operations, and translating war propaganda and

intelligence data. To guarantee their own safety, they are often given body armor to wear, sometimes carrying weapons, and they travel with the military units in armored vehicles. Meanwhile, Miri illustrates a similar narrative by explaining that interpreters can often play a key role in meetings, in resisting an ambush or confrontation against the insurgency, in patrolling scouts and expeditions, in medical evacuations, and in delivering human aid. Takeda similarly postulates that interpreters often take part in code-breaking and interrogation methods. Hajjar uses an allegory that says that the interpreter should be like a Swiss Army knife, possessing different cultural competences that range from diplomat, mediator and innovator to subject matter expert, advisor and combatant. Hajjar also points out that if the interpreter does his job very well, he will interpret not only what is being said, but also the subtle meanings and hidden messages in the conflict zone. Therefore, Hajjar stresses that the interpreter must possess skills that go beyond linguistical competence, his abilities must clearly go into the cross-cultural realm. At the same time, Baker, agrees with the previous authors and explains that interpreters were often required to go beyond their linguistic competences when it came to conflict scenarios. Finally, Baigorri makes a similar claim by pointing out that interpreters sometimes take part in cultural brokering, as liaison officers, in diplomacy, in propaganda, in intelligence and counter-intelligence activities, in combat behind enemy lines, and in interrogation of prisoners. These four authors claim that despite taking parts in these activities, the interpreter doesn't step into fixer territory, he doesn't become a fixer or something else that isn't an interpreter.

4.1.2. FIXER

Hereinafter, we have produced our own definition of what a fixer is, and provided an specific example, based on the information that we gathered from reading other authors.

Definition of a Fixer: A local individual in conflict zones like Iraq and Afghanistan, who hasn't received professional training as an interpreter, and is hired to carry out the main function of interpreting for foreign correspondents or for the militaries of Western

countries. Additionally, they take on a wide range of infinite logistical functions that aren't strictly defined.

Example of a Fixer: Afghan citizen who lives in Kabul and used to be a journalist. Losing his former job due to the war in his country, he is hired by the U.S. army to provide interpreting services although he never received professional training of that kind. His English skills and knowledge of Afghan societal norms, codes of conduct, culture, history makes him an essential bridge between U.S. troops and the Afghan population. He also has access to a wide range of contacts that he compiled when he was a journalist.

Our research to find a definition of what a fixer is, led us to the work of Palmer (2007), Packer (2009), Campbell (2011), Witchel (2004), M. Baker (2010), and Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud (2018). These five authors agree that the fixer is a local individual, without professional training as an interpreter, that is hired to interpret and also to fulfill a variety of other logistical functions. There is not any disagreement between the authors about the specific logistical functions that the fixer performs. The authors agree on the same principal logistical functions, but some of them mention additional functions that the others leave out. The main principal functions that the four previous authors agree on and mention are: (1) interpreting; (2) arranging and (on certain cases) conducting interviews; (3) security assessment of places, contacts, situations.

The fact that some of these authors mention other different functions doesn't mean that they disagree with each other. The four authors agree that the fixer carries out a wide range of functions aside from interpreting, and the list of such functions may be large. For example, except Packer, the other three authors mention that fixers also take on the job of reporting and parachute journalism. Many of them either were seasoned journalists before the war started or learned to perform the same job that a journalist performs throughout the course of the conflict. This doesn't mean that Packer disagrees on the fact that fixers are also parachute journalists, it means that he simply focuses on other characteristics of the fixer. There are other examples of this, for instance, the fact that both Packer and Witchel mention that part of the fixer's job is to find a place to eat or figuring out where to get food. The fact that Palmer and Campbell do not mention the previous function does not mean that they disagree with Packer and Witchel. A final example is that Packer and M. Baker are the

only authors that identify the fixer profile of usually being that of a young man who is an essential tool in helping foreign correspondents move around and also an essential tool against the local insurgency. Packer described them in the following way:

> *"They are generally young, cosmopolitan, quick-witted, stoical, tinged with idealism, implacable foes for their countries' extremists" (Packer, 2009).*

Similarly to Packer, Baker described them as locals who tended to be university students or recent postgraduates. Despite the fact that only Packer and M. Baker went on to describe the personal profile of the young fixer, it doesn't mean that the other authors would negate such description.

Additionally, the three of the authors agree on another important point. According to Palmer, Packer, and Witchel, part of the fixer's job is to use his cultural knowledge and his local contacts to facilitate the work of his employers and their safety. The fixer must possess knowledge of the societal, religious, tribal, political, and personal affiliations of war zones. The fixer is often given the task to find information about local individuals, personalities, social groups, organizations, events etc. These three authors also explain that fixers are used to go into areas where a Westerner can't go, unsafe territories that are difficult to infiltrate if one is unable to pass for a local. Fixers are being used as scouting parties, as rangers, or explorers, spies, guides, and drivers for the Westerners that are not able to safely go to a conflicting zone and report by themselves.

Finally, it is worth pointing out that both Palmer (2007) and Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud (2018) indicate that the majority of individuals who take the job of interpreting in conflict zones are fixers, not interpreters. Most of the so called interpreters in conflict zones are locals who were hired because foreign army or media personnel do not have enough cultural and linguistic knowledge of the conflict area. They highlight that fixers are hired due to their ability to adapt to different situations and military units, and also due to the fact that they can detect nuances in behavior that outsiders might not catch. While most fixers are ordinary local citizens, their profile is varied, ranging everywhere from university students to migrants and refugees. Finally, fixers learn to perform the same job that professional interpreters perform without receiving the professional training and advanced

language training. In other words, fixers learn to carry out the interpreter function as they work.

4.2. RECURRENT THEMES

Having established the definitions in the previous section, in the following section we aim to talk about the recurrent themes that revolve around interpreters and fixers. The following themes are interrelated and are all equally relevant in order to know more about interpreters and fixers. First, we will provide historical background, since interpreting is one of the oldest professions that humans have performed. Secondly, we will focus on the dangers that interpreters face on the ground. Third, we will dismantle the alleged neutrality role that interpreters play. Fourth, we will speak of the motivations behind their decision to interpret. Fifth, we will focus on the ethical and moral aspect of their profession. Sixth, we will discuss the narratives and identity that is associated to interpreters in conflict zones. Finally, we will explain some of the training practices and programs that are being put forth to improve the current situation of these interpreters.

4.2.1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

To look into the beginning of interpreting history, we have mainly consulted the work of Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud (2016). These two authors point at the presence of interpreters back to the very beginning of human history, from Ancient Sumer until the Nuremberg Trials. To a lesser extent, other authors such as Henchman (2016), M. Baker (2010), Kahane (2007), Baigorri (2003), Stahuljak (2000), Inghilleri (2010), and C. Baker (2010) also show examples of interpreters across the different stages of history. They claim that ever since the Stone Age, the history of humanity has narrated the story of war and conquest. Humanity has always used war as a means to gain and secure territory. For as long as conflict has existed, conflicting parties have employed people who spoke the

opponent's language in order to understand the enemy's tactics, territorial features, and obtain any possible advantage ahead of the war (Henchman, 2016). In conflict, interpreters have been employed for a long time with the purpose of fulfilling these purposes. However, they are not commonly referred to by name, and few interpreters have been named or recorded in history books (Ruiz Rosendo, Persaud, 2016)

From the sources we consulted, Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud (2016) have written the most detailed account of interpreters until the first half of the 20th Century. These two authors portray examples of the presence of interpreters dating as far back as Ancient Sumer and Ancient Egypt. Back then, interpreters were used as mediators in military campaigns and commerce relations and had a low status and rank within society. In Carthage and in Ancient Greece, interpreters were used as language mediators to guarantee the communication between different cultures and people within the conquered territories. They were used for purposes beyond trade, commerce, and the military. By the Middle Ages, interpreters were used in the Reconquista period to negotiate the Muslim terms of surrender. During the Crusades period, crusaders from 15 different nationalities participated to retake the Holy Land from the Saracens. Interpreters were used to facilitate communication within the Crusader ranks. During the Spanish colonization of the Americas, historical figures like Christopher Columbus and Hernán Cortez employed interpreters for their expeditions and military campaigns. Christian missionaries and priests also served as key interpreters during this period. From the Peace of Westphalia to the Treaty of Utrecht, interpreters had a strong role within European diplomatic circles. In the First World Word, interpreters were used to facilitate communication within the Allied troops and civilian population. The period between WWI and WWII is often regarded as the golden age of consecutive interpreting. During the Second World War, interpreters worked for dictators and figure politicians, played a key role in intelligence activities, deciphered codes, were used in the Nazi concentration camps, and passed information of the war on the Pacific. By the end of WWII, the Nuremberg Trials are considered to have marked the beginning of simultaneous interpreting.

Continuing from the previous paragraph, we found that Baigorri (2003) picked up exactly where the previous author left off. From 1945 onward, the birth of the United Nations and

the start of the Cold War marked the beginning of the modern era for interpreters. The new geopolitical order post-WWII meant that the languages spoken by the victorious countries became international languages recognized by the United Nations (English, French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese). The Arabic language would not become an official U.N. language until the 1970s Arab oil crisis. Due to the Cold War context, the Russian and the English language gained a large importance, and became the official mediums of communication through which both blocs would express their stances against each other. English, however, became the most important spoken language in all international forums due to the primary and definitive victory of the United States after WWII and during the Cold War. The long period of the Cold War had plenty of ramifications in which interpreters were directly involved, such as espionage and intelligence activities in both blocs, the nuclear arms race, the space race, international peace conferences such as the SALT treaties and the Oslo Accords etc. In this time period, fixers also played a role in contexts such as the Korean war, and also in the foreign wars carried out by the Soviet Union in Afghanistan and by the United States in Vietnam, for example. Some authors have also documented the importance of interpreters as mediators in the post-Cold War era, such as in the conflicts in the Balkan Wars (Stahuljak, 2000) and in the Rwandan Civil War (Inghilleri, 2010). Summing up all this paragraph, Inghilleri (2010) and Baker (2010) explained that there is a large stock of historical records that focus on the role of interpreters in conflict zones from WWII until the present. Most of the historical accounts documented about these interpreters focuses mainly on the conflicts of the second half of the 20th Century and the beginning of the 21st Century.

All of this historical context brings us and our research straight into the present. As we have previously seen in these paragraphs, geopolitical factors condition the use of language and therefore the use of interpreters in different contexts (Baigorri, 2003). This need for interpreters manifested across history, and now manifests in the current wars of the Middle East. War demands interpreters, and the postwar period also demands interpreters for peacebuilding and peacekeeping strategies.

4.2.2. DANGERS FACED ON THE FIELD

In the research we conducted, we found that most of the authors speak of the dangers that interpreters in conflict zones face due to the nature of their profession. Campbell (2011) refers to the dangers faced by Afghan and Iraqi interpreters and journalists, who perform the same job as foreign correspondents, but are at a greater danger since they usually are not able to leave the country. Also, she explains that on many cases they are considered to be apostates, traitors, and spies by the local population. Meanwhile, Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud (2016) and the Red T organization (2018) explain that interpreters in conflict zones are often not given the same protection offered to the military staff or international media. Like Campbell, these authors also highlight the fact that the lives of interpreters are often threatened by local residents and insurgents, due to their cooperation with foreign armies and international media. The tasks and duties that are expected of them often depart from the strict interpreter role, they are asked to do things that often place them in extremely dangerous positions. In the same way as the previous authors, Witchel (2004) points out to the dangers that are faced by fixers, rather than interpreters, and to the lack of protection and lack of medical insurance provided by the foreign militaries and media organizations who hire them. Takeda (2009) closes this argument in agreement with the previous authors, explaining that interpreters face a high risk of being killed by the insurgency when they are on-duty with Western troops on the ground and also when they are off-duty.

4.2.3. NEUTRALITY OR AFFILIATION?

In theory, the interpreter is portrayed as a neutral actor that facilitates communication between languages. Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud (2018) explain that the interpreter is expected to be able to provide an honest, neutral, un-biased message. In conflict zones, however, we found that the reality on the ground is far more complex than in interpreting theory. The complexity of these situations leads us to ask the following question: are interpreters in zones of conflict truly neutral or are they affiliated to certain interests? What we have found is that some of the authors on this field of expertise argue against the

perceived notion of the neutral interpreter. Not all the authors we consulted refer to the so-called neutrality of the interpreter, but those that do so, don't agree with that perception. The main authors that argue against the 'neutrality' perception are: Kahane (2007), Palmer (2007), Inghilleri (2010), Stahuljak (2000) and Henchman (2016), and C. Baker (2010).

We compared the words of Palmer (2007) with those of Inghilleri (2010) and Stahuljak (2000); and found that the three authors argue that the interpreter is not neutral because he/she is forced to choose sides. According to Palmer (2007), the translator (or interpreter) is "suspended between cultures, since neutrality is close to impossible" (p.14). Consequently, the interpreter has to make the choice of affiliating with one of the sides within the conflict in question. Palmer's working experience with interpreters in Iraq led him to point out that Iraqi interpreters employed by the Western media face the danger of conflicting loyalties. In relation to the embedding that interpreting in conflict requires, Palmer (2007) identifies two risks surrounding the interpreter: (1) the possibility that the interpreter may develop emotional attachment with the military unit to which he is assigned, and therefore break the professional distance that is required for neutrality; (2) that the interpreter might inevitably see the course of events from his unit's perspective and side of the conflict. Following on a similar narrative, Inghilleri (2010) argues that in most accounts of war, the impartiality of the interpreter is not brought into question because it is not perceived in the first place. Interpreters are aware that they are forced to choose sides, and accept the physical and symbolic violence that such decision implies.

In our research, we saw that Kahane (2007) is the main author that has argued against the notion of the 'neutral' interpreter. We found that he agrees with Palmer and Inghilleri, but his take on the issue is much more in depth and goes further. According to Kahane, the notion of the 'neutral' interpreter is a relatively recent and naïve idea, that hasn't always been accepted, and that the idea itself is a product of our democratic societies. We have come to believe the theoretical idea that interpreters are placed in a reserved neutral space between cultures where they act as impartial agents. Kahane explains that this naïve perception of conflict interpreters as being neutral is quickly dismantled once you examine their role in intelligence gathering, since they often participate in interrogations to extract information from prisoners. He also points out that Hitler's, Stalin's, Franco's, Churchill's,

or De Gaulle's likely were not neutral due to political affiliation, and we have no reason or proof to think that interpreters have changed in that aspect.

In addition, Kahane (2007) also points out that the perception of the neutral interpreter has not always been accepted. Not long ago, interpreters were enlisted personnel in the military ranks or part of the diplomatic corps. Interpreters were used in military campaigns to gather intelligence and gain the upper hand from the enemy. That has not changed, today interpreters are used in the front lines for the exact same purpose. Therefore, we should not be misled into thinking that they are truly suspended in a neutral space between cultures. Interpreters gather intelligence for those who hire them, their employer or contractor, who will inevitably have interests that drift the interpreter away from neutrality. Kahane also points out that the notion of the 'neutral' interpreter simply does not apply at the universal level. That notion is especially not true in armed conflict, since there is a long moral and ethical distance that separates the conflicting parties. In the Middle East, kidnapping and murdering interpreters has become common practice. Captured interpreters might have claimed that they were neutral, but insurgents will not agree with that narrative. In the case of Afghanistan, neutrality does not exist between the Taliban narrative and the Western narrative.

Similarly, we found that Henchman (2016) is also on the same page with the previous authors. Henchman contributes against the 'neutrality' perception by citing numerous historical examples to show that interpreters in conflict zones have not been neutral at any point in history. He provides examples from the Spanish conquest of the American continent, WWII British interpreters who were spies and codebreakers, and the role of interpreting and translating for espionage and deciphering purposes by both blocs during the Cold War. Kahane (2007) also makes a minor historical contribution against neutrality by citing testimonies from the Balkan War and the Serbia-Croatia conflict on 1991-1992. Finally, C. Baker (2010) explains that once the reality on the ground of the conflict zone is examined, the theory of the neutral interpreter quickly vanishes.

4.2.4. MOTIVATIONS BEHIND THE DECISION TO INTERPRET

In our research, we found that there are several motivations that lead individuals to carry out the dangerous job of interpreting in conflict zones. Most of them derive from economic, political, and personal reasons. Usually, there isn't one exclusive reason, as the different options overlap, and, in many cases, all are relevant for the individual who makes the decision. Some authors that have spoken of the motivations behind the decision to interpret are M. Baker (2010), Inghilleri (2010), Sand (2012) Campbell (2011), Baigorri (2011), Takeda (2009), and Hajjar (2016). All of them highlight the importance of the monetary-economic factor as the prime driver behind the decision to interpret.

For M. Baker (2010), the prime driver for interpreters and translators to provide their services is derived from monetary and employment reasons. In times of crisis, especially in warzones, employment and job opportunities are scarce. A lot of local interpreters who take on this job do so because their former professional sectors have been depleted by the war. Many of them are former employees in the tourism sector, engineers, doctors etc. (professions in which the individual usually has a good command of English or another foreign language).

As well as M. Baker, Campbell, Inghilleri, Takeda, Baigorri, and Hajjar mainly focus on the importance of the economic-monetary factor. Campbell (2011) interviewed interpreters and journalists in Afghanistan, most of them pointed out that the income they gain from their job makes them the exclusive economic provider in the family. Due to the high rate of unemployment caused by the war, they take risky jobs that otherwise they would not accept. In Afghanistan, the job of interpreting means going to dangerous places and meeting dangerous people, a task that most Afghans would not accept if they were not compelled to. According to interpreters that Inghilleri (2010) interviewed in Iraq, U.S. Marines paid more for interpreting services than the majority of the jobs in the country at the time. Takeda (2009) explains that the opportunity to gain financial increases and higher-paying job opportunities plays a big factor in motivating interpreters to carry out their job. Baigorri (2011) says that interpreters' motivation is closely linked with getting better paying jobs and improving their economic situation. Hajjar (2016) closes this argument by highlighting that interpreters' motivation is mostly based on reasons related to financial profit.

However, we found that M. Campbell, Inghilleri, Baigorri, and Takeda, unlike M. Baker, are the only authors to point out other reasons beyond the economic factor. Campbell pointed out that Afghan interpreters are looking for options to leave the country. According to the local interpreters she interviewed, conversations usually deal with issues relating to "visas, international scholarships, and other opportunities abroad" (2010). Sand (2012) also stressed this latter point by explaining that many interpreters work with the hope of getting Western visas in order to escape from the Middle East. Takeda agrees with the previous, adding that many interpreters carry out the job with the hope of getting a Western citizenship process. Meanwhile, Inghilleri argues that the motivations to interpreter for the coalition in the war of Iraq are also related to political conditions of the conflict and also to the social history of Iraq. According to the author, the rationales that interpreters follow to interpret in the war of Iraq are similar to those of the people who enlist in the military: motives that are related to patriotism, salary, employment, and seeking adventure. Inghilleri makes a big emphasis on the adventure factor. The attractive aspect of the 'adventure' that is associated with this kind of job remains an attractive factor for many to enlist. Baigorri explains that sometimes interpreters in conflict zones accept it because they are unable to reject it since they don't have another way to provide for themselves and their families.

4.2.5. ETHICS AND MORALITY

War often creates moral paradoxes, forcing the individual to choose sides and take part in actions that he/she may find morally dubious. In our research, we found that only three authors, M. Baker (2010), C. Baker (2014) and Inghilleri (2010), speak of the moral/ethical aspect of interpreters who work in conflict zones. While M. Baker and C. Baker have not written much of the subject, Inghilleri provides the majority of information for this specific topic. Inghilleri's work mainly focuses on Iraq, but due to close similarities it could also be applied to the case of Afghanistan.

Baker (2010) provides a relatively short contribution to the moral aspect of this profession. She points out that each interpreter or translator is an individual with his own personal history and motivations, whose personal experiences might have led him to have a

complex, changing, or even vague position towards the narrative of the conflict. However, just like virtually all other members of society, interpreters are ultimately forced to choose sides in war. There simply isn't a place for mixed identities, for split loyalties, for middle-ground narratives. The conflicting parties will not accept any of these internal identity conflicts that the interpreter may have.

For her part, Inghilleri (2010) provides a much larger contribution, going deep into the moral/ethical aspect of interpreters in conflict zones. Like M. Baker, Inghilleri also reflected on the moral paradoxes that interpreters face in war when forced to choose sides. Their personal convictions might fall into disagreement with the institutional demands that the military asks of them. Interpreters also have to carry out an ethical analysis of their role in the war. If they conscript to the U.S. army, they will have to follow the institutional ethical guidelines of such military, regardless of whether or not they agree or subscribe to every single aspect. By participating as interpreters, these individuals subscribe morally and ethically to a war that they might not have chosen, but have become de facto players of. Their participation, however, has inevitable moral consequences. By participating in the war, interpreters approve the decisions made by the government and the military. Even if they do not openly agree, interpreters get a paycheck for their services, no one is forcing them to participate. It shows that they are willing to not judge the justness of the war they are involved in. By participating, interpreters accept the rules of the game, the ends and means that the government and the military decide. For example, by providing Arabic-speaking support to the U.S. military in Iraq, interpreters support the actions of the United States in Iraq.

Finally, Inghilleri (2008, 2010) makes a series of interesting points related to the moral aspect of this profession. First, he explains that the Iraq war had a moral appeal for many, which was to fight Saddam Hussein's dictatorship and remove the Baath Party from power. Second, she explains that many interpreters in Muslim countries turn to religion to find ways in which the war can be justified, since the Quran advocates for 'justness' in the protection of innocent civilians, proportionality of the weapons and destruction used, and the respectful treatment of prisoners. Third, she explains that if combatants are obliged to fight, then it is morally acceptable for them to participate. This only applies to soldiers and

troops, not interpreters, since interpreters are not obliged to fight. Fourth, the author explains that soldiers and interpreters can arrive at similar moral and ethical principals in the conflict, since both groups are actors in military action who often end up taking part in political decisions that they did not necessarily choose. Finally, the author claims that interpreters in conflict zones often operate without moral guidance, in a grey area that escapes both moral law and authority. Their ethical demands are often trumped by the political and social realities on the conflict field. Some interpreters who work in conflict zones demand to have a specific set of ethical guidelines to guide them through the moral and political complexities of interpreting. Inghilleri argues that due to all of this, further emphasis should be placed in teaching ethical practices to interpreters in terms of their rights and obligations. C. Baker (2014) also draws attention to this by explaining that some interpreters are already showing interest in the ethical aspect of their professions, wishing to know more about the moral challenges that they might find in conflictive situations.

4.2.6. NARRATIVES AND IDENTITY

Regarding the narratives and identity aspect of interpreters in conflict zones, few authors have written on the subject. Of all the authors we researched, Baker (2010) is the only author that has written extensively about the narratives and identity conflict that interpreters face. She provides the majority of information and main narrative and identity divisions that will be discussed in the following paragraphs. Adding to the work of Baker, Miri (2014), Palmer (2007), Takeda (2009), Inghilleri (2008), Baigorri (2011), Rafael (2007), and Van Dijk, Soeters, and Ridder (2010) have also made minor contributions to this subject.

Baker (2010) argues that part of the chaos that interpreters and translators go through has to do with the manner in which other parties and actors narrate them. Their personal sense of identity might be overridden by narratives imposed on them by others. All parties have an interest in placing a specific narrative on the interpreter that ultimately suits their agenda. Regardless of their own personal identity and principles, interpreters are forced to become part of a narrative portrayed by the propaganda of the Western media, politicians, military

27

(on one side) and the propaganda of the insurgents and local population (on the other side). The individual interpreter becomes a representative figure of the sectarianism that divides the war. Takeda (2009), Inghilleri (2008), and Hajjar (2016) have also added a contribution to this point. Takeda pointed out that interpreters and fixers face internal conflicts related to their identity, since they are forced to use their linguistical capacities and cultural knowledge against their own country or people, which places them in a conflict of identity. Inghilleri describes that interpreters are often placed along the hero/villain axis, working with foreign Western troops in their own native countries creates a powerful incentive to position them as a friend or a foe by both sides in the war. Lastly, Hajjar indicates that since the local interpreter/fixer usually belongs to a different religious and ethnic group to that of the foreign Western army, mistrust often arises from both sides against him.

The first category that interpreters are forced into is the victim or hero narrative. This is usually the narrative by those who employ him. In modern times, this is clearly the narrative of the Western media and journalists. According to Baker (2010), interpreters and translators are often portrayed as victims of violence within the conflict. According to this narrative, the West uses interpreters' skills but later disposes them and gives them no guarantee of protection. Therefore, the interpreters fall as victims to sectarianism, extremists, and insurgents. The Western militaries that hire the interpreters depict them as victims, rather than as contributors to the violence they helped perpetuate in the war. The Western narrative doesn't portray the interpreters or the soldiers as perpetrators of violence, but rather as victims and heroes. In this narrative, interpreters are not merely regarded as a neutral service provider, but rather as allies or victims. The Western media tends to romanticize the relationship between the foreign journalist-soldier and the interpreter, portraying the interpreter as a friend who needs our help. Meanwhile, the same narrative portrays the local insurgents as radicals and the foreign invaders and interpreters as morally justified.

The second category into which interpreters are forced is the villain or traitor narrative. This is usually the narrative of the insurgency and of large sectors of the local population. In modern times, this is clearly the narrative of the Afghan Taliban insurgency, Iraqi Islamic militias, and large sectors of the Afghan and Iraqi population. According to Baker

(2010), Iraqis see the interpreter as one of their own, who has been weaponized against their own society. Interpreters are perceived as double agents who uses the native language as a weapon to favor foreign interests. The interpreter who works for foreign forces is a villain who should be treated just like the invading army. Some of the foreign correspondents and eyewitnesses also view interpreters with a more critical eye. They tend to be smaller newspapers and media outlets, who also portray the interpreters as villains who are complicit in the continuation of violence and dismiss the mainstream narrative of the interpreter being a victim. They portray interpreters as villains that take part in outrageous crimes of the Western militaries. Miri (2014) also poses a similar scenario for interpreters in Afghanistan. Any person who is employed by the Western forces is labeled as a traitor by the insurgency, and some locals associate his monetary gains to the presence of the Western foreigners, awakening a feeling of resentment within the population. Lastly, both Rafael (2007) and Inghilleri (2010) refer to the local insurgency and parts of the population considering interpreters as traitors. Rafael makes reference to the classical Italian term for this notion, known as *traduttore traditore*. A traitor who collaborates for Western forces against the interest of his own nation and countrymen. Inghilleri also refers to an English term that has been invented to describe this notion, 'transtraitors', those who collaborate with the enemy and betrays his own culture, people, religion.

The third category that interpreters are forced into is the 'trustworthy ally' narrative. According to Palmer (2007), the journalists he interviewed in Iraq declared that they trusted their local fixers. Some of them even went as far as saying that they had trusted their interpreters regularly with their own lives. Foreign journalists and correspondents usually trust the quality of the work of their interpreters due to the previous record that they have with other Western colleagues. Individual soldiers on the battlefield who bonded with their local interpreters also pointed out that they trust them without exception or reservation. However, Palmer points out that these declarations are far from the norm. The higher military command does not trust local interpreters as much as the lower ranks. Van Dijk, Soeters, and Ridder (2010) contribute to this category by pointing out to the interviews they analyzed of Dutch soldiers on the ground in Afghanistan, who showed a general sense of satisfaction with their local interpreters, claiming that they rarely had a problem with them and that they were all loyal.

The fourth category in which interpreters are labeled is the 'security threat' narrative. M. Baker (2010) specifies that hired interpreters are largely and more commonly perceived to pose a potential security threat. Those interpreters recruited locally are ethnically part of the 'enemy', therefore the government and the military do not see them entirely as trustworthy and reliable communicators. Baker cites examples from Japanese-American interpreters working for the U.S. during WWII and modern examples of interpreters employed by the Western coalition in countries like Iraq and Afghanistan. According to his specific expertise on Iraq, M. Baker claims that local interpreters who ethnically belong to the 'enemy' group are not trusted do to their exposure to public narratives opposite to those of the coalition. They could easily be influenced by some public narratives of the war that are built and designed by the 'enemy.' They cannot be trusted because they cohabitate in the same neighborhoods with 'enemy' narrative. In other words, the U.S. army "has the underlying assumption that 'foreign' interpreters are by definition untrustworthy" (M. Baker, 2010, p.211). The U.S. military often tends to recruit interpreters that come from their own ranks, American-born if possible. As far as the U.S. military is concern, trust and loyalty is largely determined by ethnic background. Meanwhile, Palmer (2007) explains that some Arabic interpreters working for the U.S. military have been accused by American military personnel and conservative media of sabotaging interviews with prisoners in Guantanamo Bay prison and passing false information to American soldiers in Iraq. Lastly, Baigorri (2011), Rafael (2007), Takeda (2009), and Van Dijk, Soeters, and Ridder (2010) agree on the fact that the loyalty of interpreters is often questioned due to the high risk of them posing a security threat, with the potential danger of being undercover insurgents or informants for the insurgency. This suspicion of loyalty manifested in the past and still manifests today.

4.2.7. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONALIZATION: PROGRAMS, INITIATIVES, PROJECTS

There are various institutions that seek the objective of helping interpreters in conflict zones. In the following section, we mention three of the main institutions (Red T, AIIC, FIT) and the programs that they have released in order to help interpreters and translators in

conflict zones. Red T is a "non-profit organization dedicated to the protection of interpreters and translators in conflict zones"; and raises awareness about the dangers that these translators and interpreters might face. AIIC[2] also advocates in favor of disadvantaged interpreters in zones of conflict on a number of articles. FIT[3] also contributes to the cause of interpreters in conflict zones. (Red T, 2018)

PROGRAM I: CONFLICT ZONE FIELD GUIDE FOR CIVILIAN TRANSLATORS/INTERPRETERS AND USERS OF THEIR SERVICES

The tripartite alliance between Red T, FIT, and AIIC has put forward a project entitled Conflict Zone Field Guide for Civilian Translators/Interpreters and Users of Their Services. This project seeks to serve as a guide that will provide conflict interpreters with their 'rights' and 'responsibilities' in the field. On one hand, interpreters and translators should be aware that they have the right to be provided security by their contractors, whether it is the military or international media. On the other hand, interpreters and translators should be aware of their responsibility to uphold certain standards of ethics and morality. It is a document that outlines the rights, responsibilities, and practices for interpreters and translators who are employed by journalists, foreign correspondents, armed forces, NGOs, and international organizations in conflict zones. (AIIC, FIT, & Red T, 2012)

PROGRAM II: INTERPRETING IN ZONES OF CRISIS AND WAR

AIIC and the École de traduction et d'interprétation (ETI) have developed a new program through the Geneva International Academic Network. The program named "Interpreting in zones of crisis and war" seeks to develop interpreting skills in conflict zones (Geneva International Academic Network, 2005). The program offers two online modules in order to improve such skills. Module 1: "Focuses on the specifics of communication situations with regard to professional ethics and on empowering the interpreter to better understand what is

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[2] AIIC: Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence/International Association of Conference Interpreters.

[3] FIT: Federation of Interpreters and Translators.

at stake in various communication situations in order to improve communication for all involved." Module 2: "Focuses on essential consecutive interpreting skills, including sample communication scenarios and essential technical terminology" (Bali, & Moser-Mercer, 2018). Warzones and conflict areas make it difficult to teach and educate people, since technology is often halted or constrained. Therefore, this online program consists of concepts that can quickly be passed down, taught and learned. Each learning activity shouldn't take more than 10 minutes, since the learning process can often be obstructed by the warring nature of the conflict.

PROGRAM III: INZONE – THE CENTER FOR INTERPRETING IN CONFLICT ZONES

The Department of Interpretation of the University of Geneva created InZone in 2010 with the goal of "improving communication in conflict zones by delivering virtual and on-site training to interpreters on the field" (InZone, 2013). This program was started because interpreters generally do not receive professional training in crisis and security management before heading to a conflict zone. This lack of training often puts the lives of interpreters and others in danger and sometimes produces miscommunication with the local population. According to Allen (2012), the goal of this initiative is to create a code of "ethics, standards of conduct, basic education and training requirements, and minimum standards for workplace requirements" for interpreters in conflict zones.

InZone has the purpose of tackling all elements that could potentially cause a culture shock, an obstacle in the communication process, or any kind of discrepancy. For this, InZone has developed a Virtual Institute in which comprehensive, methodical lessons are given to interpreters working in conflict zones. Here, it provides professional ethics, skill development, conflict resolution skills, training courses, and organizational skills. It focuses on fields of expertise such as training, research, documentation, and community-building. This program provides innovative advantages that previous programs did not address. First, it found what interpreters in conflict zones needed most, which is professional training regarding conducts of behavior and ethics. Second, it addressed these

needs by connecting interpreters around the world through online programs, even those interpreters who are working in the most remote, disconnected, and dangerous areas (InZone, 2013).

4.3. MODERN WARFARE: THE EXAMPLES OF IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

The most recent and well-documented cases of interpreters in conflict zones are the ones in Iraq and Afghanistan. Throughout this research project, we have given multiple examples and references of authors who have written about the experience of interpreters working in the warzones of Iraq and Afghanistan. Some of the authors that have spoken of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are Palmer (2007), M. Baker (2010), Miri (2014), Witchel (2004), Henchman (2016), Packer (2009), Campbell (2011), Kahane (2007), Inghilleri (2010), and Takeda (2009). Our research has led us to find that the authors generally agree on the description of war as seen and experienced by the interpreters in both Iraq and Afghanistan. There is not much disagreement between the authors on any particular subject, but some of them tend to focus on different aspects of the war.

Both Palmer (2007), M. Baker (2010), and Takeda (2009) highlight the need for the use of interpreters that emerged with the Iraq war, the conflict in Afghanistan, 9/11, and the War on Terror. These authors mention that interpreters have played the role of mediators in this context, being a crucial aspect for the success of military and intelligence operations. They explain that the Western powers have used both first-generation immigrants and local interpreters/fixers to cover the growing demand for languages such as Arabic, Pashtu, Dari, Farsi, Kurdish etc. Adding to the previous authors, Henchman (2016) explained that the need for the use of interpreters arose in Iraq and Afghanistan due to the nature of such wars, consisting on shadow warfare techniques, attrition warfare, guerrilla tactics etc. The language barrier and cultural differences meant a difficulty for the Western armies, and thus they had to hire interpreters who spoke Arabic, Dari, and Pashto. Local interpreters being recruited and incorporated within the army units in order to communicate with the local

population was crucial. Finally, Henchman (2016) and Packer (2009) explained how the local insurgency in both countries views the interpreters as a potential target, infidels, apostates, traitors, and spies for the West.

THE EXAMPLE OF IRAQ

Authors such as Palmer (2007), Campbell (2011), Kahane (2007), and Inghilleri (2010), have heavily focused on the case of Iraq. Palmer (2007) begins by explaining that the security conditions in Iraq heavily declined from 2003 onward, and that formerly secured areas for foreign media and their interpreters became too dangerous to access. Since then, more than half of the media personnel killed in Iraq were interpreters. Campbell (2011) supports the previous claim by pointing out that Iraq was the country had the highest interpreter casualties. Kahane (2007) also added to the previous authors, saying that after the military, interpreters constituted the largest group of victims in the war in Iraq (without counting the civilian population). Finally, relating to the previous, Inghilleri (2010) has pointed to a common misconception that has often put the lives of interpreters in Iraq in danger. On the battlefield, interpreters develop close bonds with the military units due to mutual dependence in such extreme conditions, which often led many of them to believe that they were somehow 'equal' to the military. In reality, they are not equals, local interpreters do not form part of the Western militaries and they are therefore not given sufficient protection on many cases.

THE EXAMPLE OF AFGHANISTAN

Similar to the case of Iraq, authors such as Miri (2014), Kahane (2007) Witchel (2004), and Campbell (2011) have spoken about the situation that interpreters and translators face in Afghanistan. Miri has been the main author that wrote about the situation in Afghanistan

Miri (2014) argues that the insurgent menace in Afghanistan also poses a massive threat to local interpreters, since they don't have the same protection that can be found in Western military bases. The majority of them are worried about Western troops being pulled out of Afghanistan, for they believe that they will no longer receive protection against the Taliban

or Al Qaeda. This author also explains how cultural problems pose a significant obstacle to Western troops and their interpreters. In Afghanistan, the beliefs of Islam demand that the interpreter and the foreigner respect a series of key factors when it comes to the act of communication. Islam is a religion with a lot of subtle codes of behavior that are hard to understand, marked by a strong tradition that dates centuries back. In this context, it is important for the Westerners to not meddle in sacred moments of Islamic prayer. Patrolling near a mosque during the hours of prayer can be interpreted in a hostile sense, Afghans appreciate when the foreign forces respect their holy hours. Finally, Miri explains that interpreters have been key to unite the Western forces with the local population, since they have brought an influx of new ideas and points of view to the Afghan population.

Meanwhile, other authors like Campbell (2011) add to what Miri (2014) explained by stating that interpreters face extreme danger in Afghanistan. Both interpreters and international media suffer brutal attacks on a regular basis, they face extreme danger when writing or interpreting against government corruption and organized crime. Campbell claims that in Afghanistan, the men behind corruption and the drug business are just as dangerous to interpreters as the Taliban are. Criminal networks and individuals of this kind are less ideological, therefore (according to Campbell) more prone to killing in a ruthless manner. Just like in Iraq, Afghan interpreters often live with their families outside the military compounds, in the outskirts of Kabul and other major cities, therefore being exposed to the Taliban and other entities that might want to hurt them. Finally, authors like Kahane (2007) and Witchel (2004) cite different accounts of interpreters and fixers being kidnapped and killed by the Taliban or being detained, tortured, or charged under criminal offenses by the country's authorities.

5. ANALYSIS

In this part, we have divided the authors into different tables that are separated according to the four categories that we described in the state of affairs. Having (1) primary and academic, (2) secondary and academic, (3) primary and non-academic, and (4) secondary and non-academic sources, we have divided those categories into tables in order to compare them. Our objective in this section was to contrast the different categories, see what they have in common, in what they differentiate, if certain types of sources give priority to certain themes while other sources focus on other issues. Our main goal is to see if we can identify patterns between the authors and the different types of sources, and derive the relevant conclusions.

5.1. PRIMARY AND ACADEMIC SOURCES

TABLE 1	Primary & Academic Sources	
	Jerry Palmer (2007)	**Amir Miri (2014)**
Definition: Interpreter	X	X
Definition: Fixer	X	
Historical Background		
Dangers on the Field		
Neutrality or Affiliation	X	
Motivations		
Ethics & Morality		
Narratives & Identity	X	X
Training & Professionalization		
Modern Warfare: Iraq & Afghanistan	X	X

Table 1: Primary and academic sources

As we can observe in this table, our primary and academic sources mention three of the same recurrent themes. Both Palmer and Miri contribute to the definition of the term

interpreter in conflict zones, the narratives and identity associated with such interpreters, and the modern warfare examples that we can find today in Iraq and Afghanistan. Palmer, however, covers a wider range of topics than Miri and also elaborates on the definition of the term fixer and on the alleged neutrality of interpreters in conflict zones. Neither of these two authors makes mention of the historical background of interpreters in conflict zones, the dangers that interpreters face on the field, their motivations behind their profession, the ethics and morality aspect, and their training programs.

Both of these authors' testimonies are based on their direct experience on the ground with interpreters, Palmer in Iraq and Miri in Afghanistan. Both Palmer and Miri agree on the definition that they give to the 'interpreter in conflict zone' concept.   While they both also focus on the narratives and identity aspect, Palmer concentrates on the 'trustworthy ally' and 'security threat' narrative, while Miri focalizes on the 'traitor' narrative. Both authors offer very similar descriptions of the modern warfare scenarios in the Middle East and how they affect interpreters in such conflict zones. Even though Palmer are Miri are talking about two different countries, what they describe is fairly similar. Meanwhile, Palmer addresses a couple of recurrent themes that Miri does not cover. Palmer agrees with other cited authors in the definition that he provides for the term fixer, and also tackles the neutrality question surrounding the interpreter/fixer in a conflict zone, coinciding with other authors that due to the conditions on the ground, the interpreter/fixer is placed in a context where he can't be neutral.

5.2. SECONDARY AND ACADEMIC SOURCES (A)

TABLE 2	Secondary & Academic Sources (A)					
	Lucía Ruiz Rosendo, Persaud (2016, 2017)	Moira Inghilleri (2005, 2008, 2010)	Mona Baker (2010)	Jesús Baigorri (2003, 2011)	Remi M. Hajjar (2016)	Vicente L. Rafael (2007)
Definition: Interpreter	X	X		X	X	
Definition: Fixer	X		X			
Historical Background	X	X	X	X		
Dangers on the Field						
Neutrality or Affiliation	X	X				
Motivations		X	X	X	X	
Ethics & Morality		X	X			
Narratives & Identity		X	X	X		X
Training & Professionalization						
Modern Warfare: Iraq & Afghanistan		X				

Table 2: Secondary and academic sources (A)

5.3. SECONDARY AND ACADEMIC SOURCES (B)

TABLE 3	Secondary & Academic Sources (B)					
	Kayoko Takeda (2009)	Zrinka Stahuljak (2000)	Louise Askew & Myriam Salama-Carr (2011)	Andrea van Dijk, Joseph Soeters, Richard de Ridder (2010)	Catherine Baker (2010)	Mona Baker &Carol Maier (2011)
Definition: Interpreter	X				X	
Definition: Fixer						
Historical Background		X			X	
Dangers on the Field	X					
Neutrality or Affiliation		X			X	
Motivations	X					
Ethics & Morality					X	
Narratives & Identity	X			X		
Training & Professionalization						
Modern Warfare: Iraq & Afghanistan	X					

Table 3: Secondary and academic sources (B)

Due to space limitations, we could not provide tables 2 and 3 together, so it is important to note that table 3 is a continuation of table 2 and therefore we will analyze them together. As we can observe, the secondary and academic sources in these two tables do not cover the same recurrent themes, there is not a clear pattern that can be drawn just by looking at the tables. What is more, there is not one single recurrent theme that all authors cover. The themes that are covered the most are the definition of the term interpreter, the historical background of interpreters in conflict zones, their motivations to carry out the job, and the narratives and identity associated with them.

The definition of the term interpreter is covered by Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud, Inghilleri, Baigorri, Hajjar, Takeda, and C. Baker. The definition of the term fixer is covered by Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud and M. Baker. The authors that contribute to the historical background of interpreters in conflict zones are Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud, Inghilleri, M. Baker, Baigorri, Stahuljak, and C. Baker. The only secondary and academic source that focuses on the dangers on the field is Takeda. Regarding the alleged neutrality of interpreters, the secondary and academic sources that focus on that aspect are Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud, Inghilleri, Stahuljak, and C. Baker. Those who report about the interpreters' motivation to carry out the job are Inghilleri, M. Baker, Baigorri, Hajjar, and Takeda. The ethics and morality aspect is explained by Inghilleri, M. Baker, and C. Baker. The secondary and academic sources that focus on the narratives and identity associated to interpreters in conflict zones are Inghilleri, M. Baker, Baigorri, Rafael, Takeda, and also Van Dijk, Soeters, and Ridder. None of the secondary and academic sources focus on the training and professionalization programs for interpreters. As of the modern warfare scenarios in Iraq and Afghanistan, all of these authors make a quick mention of those scenarios as current examples of interpreters in conflict zones, but the only secondary and academic sources that go into detail are Inghilleri and Takeda.

When it comes to the definition of the term interpreter, those secondary and academic sources that provide a definition agree overall. Ruiz Rosendo, Inghilleri, Baigorri, Hajjar, Takeda, and C. Baker describe the interpreter as an individual with professional training who interprets in conflict zones like Afghanistan and Iraq. These authors focus on different aspects in order to describe the functions of the interpreter in order to differentiate him from the fixer. While focusing on different aspects, however, they do not disagree with anything related to the definition or functions of the term interpreter. As opposed to the definition of the interpreter, fewer secondary and academic sources contribute to the fixer term. Only Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud and M. Baker add to the definition of the term fixer, they agree with the rest of the authors regarding the main principal functions of the fixer. M. Baker focuses on describing the fixer profile while Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud focus on pointing out that the majority of linguists working in conflict zones are fixers, not interpreters. Regarding the historical background, the authors generally agree that interpreters have been present across history, but each author focuses on describing their

role in a different moment of history. Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud offer the largest timeline account, from Ancient Sumer and Ancient Egypt to WWII and the Nuremberg Trials. Meanwhile, Baigorri focuses on the post-WWII scenario, describing the role of interpreters in the United Nations and in the many conflicts of the Cold War. At the same time, Stahuljak and Inghilleri focus on the 90s conflicts of the Balkan Wars and the African civil wars. C. Baker and Inghilleri finally point out that the majority of literature about interpreters in conflict zones throughout history describe their role in the 20th and 21st centuries. Takeda is the only secondary and academic source that focuses on the dangers on the field, agreeing with other authors that interpreters face a tremendous risk of being killed both on duty with Western military troops and also off-duty. The secondary and academic sources that focus on the neutrality are Ruiz Rosendo and Persaud, Inghilleri, Stahuljak, and C. Baker; and these authors all agree that the interpreter and the fixer cannot be neutral because they are forced to choose sides. Regarding the motivations for the interpreters, those secondary and academic sources that treat the issue are Inghilleri, M. Baker, Baigorri, Hajjar, and Takeda. We previously saw that all of these authors agree on the monetary factor as the principal motivator for interpreters in conflict zones, however, all of them also indicate at least one other motivation that is not related to money or income (such as adventure, visas, politics etc.). When it comes to the ethics and morality aspect, our secondary and academic sources were Inghilleri, M. Baker, and C. Baker. While Inghilleri provides the bulkwork for this section, explaining the various moral and ethical paradoxes that interpreters in conflict zones must go through, M. Baker makes a shorter contribution by claiming that in conflict scenarios there is simply is no time to think about the moral and ethical implications. C. Baker provides a relatively short contribution, explaining that interpreters are beginning to show interest in ethics training. As of the narratives and identity, the secondary and academic sources that deal with this are Inghilleri, M. Baker, Baigorri, Rafael, Takeda, and also Van Dijk, Soeters, and de Ridder. Of these authors, M. Baker, Inghilleri, Takeda, and Hajjar point out that there is a general interest by all parties within a conflict to place the interpreter across identity narratives. M. Baker provides the four main categories where the interpreter is placed, the (1) hero/victim, the (2) the villain/traitor, (3) the trustworthy ally, (4) and the security threat. Rafael and Inghilleri contribute to the villain/traitor narrative, claiming that the interpreter is often considered to

41

be collaborating with the enemy by his own countrymen. Van Dijk, Soeters and de Ridder contribute to the trustworthy ally narrative, claiming that the troops they interviewed overwhelmingly trusted their interpreters. Baigorri, Rafael, Takeda, and Van Dijk add to the security threat narrative, adding that interpreters' loyalty is often put into question. Regarding the modern warfare scenarios for interpreters in Afghanistan and Iraq, these authors mention these countries as examples, but only Inghilleri and Takeda provide a detailed account. In this regard, Takeda explained how the demand for interpreters and fixers rose in the context of the War on Terror, while Inghilleri focused on describing the situation of interpreters in Iraq.

5.4. PRIMARY AND NON-ACADEMIC SOURCES

TABLE 4	Primary & Non-Academic Sources	
	Anonymous Interpreter (2018)	Monica Campbell (2011)
Definition: Interpreter		
Definition: Fixer		X
Historical Background		
Dangers on the Field	X	X
Neutrality or Affiliation	X	
Motivations	X	X
Ethics & Morality	X	
Narratives & Identity		
Training & Professionalization	X	
Modern Warfare: Iraq & Afghanistan	X	X

Table 4: Primary and non-academic sources

As we can observe from this table, our primary & non-academic sources cover four of the same recurrent themes. Both our anonymous interpreter and Campbell contribute to the dangers on the field that interpreters face, the motivations behind their profession, and the current modern warfare examples in Iraq and Afghanistan. Our anonymous interpreter, however, covers a wider range of topics than Campbell, also contributing to the neutrality aspect, the ethics and morality related to the profession, and the training programs for interpreters. By contrast, Campbell offers a definition for the term fixer while the

anonymous interviewee does not provide one. Neither of these sources mention anything related to the definition of the term interpreter, the historical background of interpreters nor the narratives and identity associated to them.

As we can observe in the theoretical framework, Campbell agrees with other authors in the definition of the term fixer, describing him as a local individual without professional training who takes on the job of interpreting and also fulfills other actions. In contrast, our anonymous interpreter only talks of 'interpreters' and never mentions 'fixers'. Both Campbell and the anonymous interpreter talk of the dangers on the field faced by interpreters, but from different points of view. Campbell describes that interpreters and fixers face an often higher risk than the military troops that they work for. Meanwhile, the anonymous interpreter, rather than comparing the danger faced by the interpreters versus the danger faced by the military, explains that both are exposed to a similar amount of risk. Regarding the neutrality aspect, Campbell does not mention anything, but our anonymous interpreter is the only source that disagrees with all other authors. The anonymous interpreter, in comparison with all other authors who dismantled the alleged neutrality of the interpreter, explains that the interpreter is in fact a neutral figure who mediates and facilitates communication between different cultures and languages. When it comes to the motivations behind interpreters' decision to carry out their job, both our anonymous interpreter and Campbell point to the monetary/financial reason as the prime motivator. Both of them claim that what the Afghan interpreters truly want is money to sustain themselves and their families, and the job of interpreting for Western media and militaries is better payed than most other jobs in Afghanistan. In terms of ethics and morality, Campbell does not mention anything, and our anonymous interpreter says that in Afghanistan he was never in a position where he had to make a dubious ethical/moral decision as an interpreter. When it comes to the training and professionalization programs being put into practice, Campbell doesn't mention any of this, but our anonymous interpreter explains that he knew that the Norwegian troops in Afghanistan were giving some kind of weapons and defense training to interpreters working for them. Finally, both authors go into thorough detail when describing the reality on the ground in the modern warfare example of Afghanistan.

5.5. SECONDARY AND NON-ACADEMIC SOURCES

TABLE 5	Secondary & Non-Academic Sources							
	George Packer (2009)	Andrew Sand (2012)	Elizabeth Witchel (2004)	Barbara Moser-Mercer & Grégoire Bali (2008)	Eduardo Kahane (2007)	John Henchman (2016)	Katharine Allen (2012)	Red T, AIIC, FIT (2012, 2013, 2018)
Definition: Interpreter								
Definition: Fixer	X		X					
Historical Background					X	X		
Dangers on the Field			X					X
Neutrality or Affiliation					X	X		
Motivations		X						
Ethics & Morality								
Narratives & Identity								
Training & Professionalization				X			X	X
Modern Warfare: Iraq & Afghanistan	X		X					

Table 5: Secondary and non-academic sources

By observing the previous table, we can report that our secondary and non-academic sources cover the majority, but not all, of the listed recurrent themes. None of these authors mentions or speaks of the definition of the term interpreter, of the ethics and morality aspect, or of the narratives and identity associated to interpreters. We also noticed that for each recurrent theme, there is either only one, two, or three secondary and non-academic sources that elaborate on it. For example, only Packer and Witchel provide a definition for

the term fixer. The only two authors in this case that offer some sort of thorough historical background are Kahane and Henchman. They are also the only authors to focus on the alleged neutrality aspect of the interpreter. Regarding the dangers on the field faced by interpreters, only Witchel and the Red T, AIIC, and FIT organizations mention them. Sand is the only secondary and non-academic source that speaks about the motivations behind interpreters' decision to interpret. Finally, only Moser-Mercer and Bali, Allen, and the Red T, AIIC, and FIT organizations provide some information to the training and professionalization programs of interpreters, and only Packer and Witchel contribute to the modern warfare cases in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In the definition of the term fixer, Packer and Witchel agree with other authors in the definition of the term and the general functions that the fixer plays. However, both authors take the extra step and they mention that the fixer's job sometimes is to get food or figuring out where to eat. Packer also goes into describing the fixer's profile as a person, something that Witchel omits. Regarding the historical background of interpreters in conflict zones, Henchman explains that interpreters have always been used across history in order to obtain strategical and cultural advantage over the enemy. Meanwhile, Kahane gives out various examples of this throughout history, such as in the Spanish conquest of the American continent or in WWII. As to the dangers on the field, the Red T organization, AIIC, and FIT acknowledge that interpreters in conflict zones are in huge danger and that they must be protected. Meanwhile, Witchel focuses on the danger faced by fixers, rather than interpreters, and explains that there are not enough mechanisms to protect them. About the alleged neutrality aspect of interpreters, Kahane and Henchman provide historical examples that show that interpreters in conflict zones were never neutral. Both claim that taking a look at historical evidence quickly dismantles the 'neutrality' perception, Kahane goes as far as to claim that this perception is fairly recent, that it hasn't always existed, and that it doesn't apply at any global or local level. Regarding the motivations of interpreters, Sand is one of the many authors to explain that the monetary/financial aspect is the main motivator, but he was also quick to point to Western visas as a strong motivator as well. As to the training and professionalization of interpreters, Moser-Mercer and Bali, Allen, and Red T, AIIC, and FIT organizations have provided some information. While the organizations explain the programs being put in place in detail, Moser-Mercer and Bali and also Allen

add some details to explain what those programs are about. Finally, when it comes to the modern warfare examples in Afghanistan and Iraq, Packer was quick to point out that interpreters and fixers who work for the Western militaries and media in both countries are persecuted by the local insurgency and also parts of the local population. Meanwhile, Witchel focuses specifically on the case of Afghanistan and provides examples of interpreters and fixers being kidnapped, killed, and tortured on multiple occasions by the Taliban.

5.6. CRITICAL CONSIDERATIONS

We hoped that out of that comparison we would be able to identify patterns from the above categories and therefore draw some conclusions. For example, to observe that primary and academic sources focus more on certain subjects related to the interpreter in conflict zones while the secondary and non-academic sources focused on other themes. However, what we have found is that there are not clear patterns to be observed by comparing primary and academic sources versus secondary and non-academic sources. The different authors are well scattered across the spectrum of the theoretical framework; therefore, we are unable to conclude that a certain type of author prioritizes some themes over others. The coverage of different themes by the different types of authors and sources is very evenly distributed.

What we have observed is that the authors mostly agree on whatever theme or definition they are describing. They might put focus on different aspects of a definition or theme, prioritize certain parts within an argument, but they never disagree with each other. In other words, the authors rarely say something that is mutually exclusive to what the other authors have said. What we found is that when it comes to interpreters in conflict zones, the authors describing this phenomenon complement each other's work rather than disagree with one another. The only exception we have noticed was when our anonymous interpreter pointed out that interpreters in conflict zones are neutral, contradicting all previous authors on that subject.

Observing the different authors and sources that we used in the theoretical framework, on the recurrent themes, and on this analysis, we have seen that while there is a shortage of

sources, at least many of them are academic. A good number of academic authors have written about this subject. However, we have noticed a lack of primary sources, due to the fact that most authors do not have first hard experience on the ground with interpreters working in conflict zones. While still academic, this inevitably leaves us with a surplus of secondary, rather than primary, information.

Another observation that we made while researching this project is that sometimes, some authors use the term interpreter to describe all types of linguists working in conflict zones. For instance, a number of times we noticed that some authors would mention the term interpreter when they were in fact describing a fixer. Only two of our sources, M. Baker (2010) and Van Dijk, Soeters, and de Ridder (2010), openly acknowledged that this was a problem when it came to the research of interpreters in conflict zones. This would lead future investigators to confusion on the subject, which is why we have made it a priority in the theoretical framework to clearly establish the distinction between terms.

Throughout this project, we have noticed that most authors tend to speak about interpreters in conflict zones from a very general perspective, from an outsider point of view. A large number of the authors that we cited talk about the various themes surrounding the interpreter, but often they do not go into thorough detail. For instance, many authors point to the economic factor as a great motivator for interpreters in conflict zones, but barely any of them go into any detail to describe the actual figures and numbers of how much money they earn. Perhaps, this is because that type of information is difficult to obtain, and we would need more first-hand experience testimonies. We suggest that future research into this subject focus more on first-hand experience of interpreters in conflict zones or people who have worked with them directly.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Concluding our investigation, we can affirm that there is a general lack of information about the role of 'interpreters' and 'fixers' in conflict zones. There is still a fair amount of academic literature that has allowed us to carry out this project, but the overall shortage of more academic sources is noticeable. However, there is still a generalized lack of information about this topic if we compare it to other subjects within the interpreting and translation fields of expertise. Some authors we cited pointed out that while there has been a recent growing interest about interpreters in conflict zones, there is still a considerable lack of knowledge and information on this subject. In the elaboration of this project, we have noticed that there is a decent amount of previous investigation on the subject by previous authors. However, we conclude that there is still need to more in-detail research on the matter. We consider that this project is a good collective introduction of what many authors have said on the subject of interpreters in conflict zones. Having said that, we hope that this project will create future interest on other investigators who will start where we left off and continue researching further.

The definition and differentiation of the terms interpreter and fixer has been pertinent throughout this project. We have made it our priority to clearly distinguish both and describe the details that separate both terms, since some authors use the term interpreter interchangeably to describe any linguist in a conflict zone. We have concluded through detailed research that an interpreter can only be a person that has received professional training as such, someone who has a certified title of holding that profession. Interpreters may be asked to carry out other functions in the context of conflict, but that does not turn them into fixers. Vice-versa, fixers are usually local individuals (of the country in conflict) who perform the task of interpreting along a long list of other logistical tasks that can range from cultural mediation and diplomacy to providing contacts and finding places to eat.

There are multiple recurrent themes relating to the historical background, dangers faced on the field, alleged neutrality, motivations, ethics and morality, and training and

professionalization programs that revolve around interpreters in conflict zones. As of the historical background, authors point out that as long as there is conflict and war, there will be interpreters. Interpreters and fixers in conflict zones have been present across history, form their earliest records in Ancient Sumer and Ancient Egypt to the modern wars of the late 20th Century and early 21st Century. About the dangers that interpreters face on the ground, several authors have claimed that they are in constant risk of being killed, kidnapped, or tortured by the local insurgency in places like Iraq and Afghanistan. Regarding neutrality, interpreting theory often claims that the interpreter is an impartial mediator between cultures and people who strictly commits to transmitting and facilitating communication. However, various authors throughout this research provide multiple historical and present examples that prove this to be untrue in the case of interpreters in conflict zones. In war and conflict, things quickly become polarized, and people choose sides (or sides are chosen for them) in order to survive. According to various authors, interpreters are no exception to this rule. Meanwhile, the interpreters' motivations to work in a conflict zones are often related to personal, monetary, political, and adventure related reason, national interpreters being more driven by monetary and adventure related reasons. Local interpreters are driven mostly by monetary reasons often connected to the lack of opportunities in their war-torn homelands. At the same time, interpreters in conflict zones face certain ethical and moral conflict relating to their profession. By participating in the war, interpreters tacitly approve the decisions taken by the side they are in, giving indirect approval to morally dubious military decisions. This has led interpreters on many instances to indirectly participate in human rights violations and other unethical actions. Additionally, interpreters in zones of conflict get narratives built around them. Whether they approve or not, one side or the other will take on the task as labeling them as a 'hero', a 'victim', a 'villain', or a 'traitor'. They will also inevitably be characterized into the 'trustworthy ally' versus 'security threat' dichotomy. Finally, some programs are being put into place in order to improve the situation of interpreters in conflict zones. With a different focus, each of these programs seek to target the needs of interpreters in conflict zones through a variety of methods and mechanisms. Prominent initiatives are being put forth by entities like AIIC, FIT, Red T, InZone, the Geneva International Academic Network etc.

In this work, we have found that a large amount of information on interpreters and fixers in conflict zones is focused on today. We have seen that due to the events of the 9/11 attacks, the War on Terror, and the Middle Eastern wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the demand for interpreters and fixers of Arabic, Urdu, Farsi, Kurdish, Pashtu etc. has risen strongly. Aside from the historical records, most of the information that we have found regarding the topic of interpreters in conflict zones is explained from the point of view of Iraq and Afghanistan as case examples. Most of the authors, either through first or second hand experienced, have written about the role of interpreters and fixers in Iraq and Afghanistan. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been the last two largely documented wars in which interpreters have been crucial to win the conflict.

Finally, from our analysis of the information and authors that we cited, we conclude that there are hardly any patterns that can be clearly drawn. The only patterns that we could clearly point out were: (1) that the authors generally tend to agree with each other regardless of the recurrent theme or definition in question; (2) that some authors use interpreter as an interchangeable term; (3) that most authors lack primary experience on the subject, and that their knowledge derives from investigating other authors, (4) that future research on this subject should focus on primary information, and try to find disagreement with the previous authors in order to offer a different perspective, and therefore a more complete, and complex, comparison.

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8. ANNEXES

Anonymous interview with "S.A.", Dari interpreter who worked for the Spanish Ministry of Defense in Afghanistan from 2005-2014.

1. **First of all, could you give us some background on yourself: What languages do you speak? How many years did you spend in Afghanistan? What was your job? Who did you work for?**

I came to Spain many years ago, in the year 1971. Here in Spain, I got my degree in Information Science (Ciencias de la Información), specifying in the branch of Image & Sound. Later, I worked on various businesses trading/selling carpets. At one point I got a call offering me to be an interpreter in Afghanistan. I took an exam, did some security checks, and by the year 2005 I was working in Afghanistan as an interpreter, and stayed there until 2014. I was hired by the Spanish Ministry of Defense since I was fluent in English, Spanish, and Farsi. Farsi is a very similar language to Dari, the language for which I was hired to interpret in Afghanistan.

2. **What kind of training did you receive? Are you a certified interpreter/translator?**

I took a formal exam here in Spain, but I was already a certified interpreter in Farsi, so I had no problems. The exam I took wasn't very exhaustive, I passed the tests very rapidly. At around that time, I was the only certified interpreter in Afghanistan. Prior to my arriving there, me and the other interpreters weren't forced to take any preparation tests or formation process. We just did a short language exam in Dari, if you could more or less manage, then you were hired.

3. What difficulties did you find in your time working in Afghanistan? What were the biggest obstacles?

The main problem in Afghanistan was that the main languages spoken are Pashtu and Dari. Pashtu is very complicated, but we Iranians can more or less understand Dari. Dari is like an old version of the Persian language, it has elements of Pashtu, English etc. When I arrived in Afghanistan, me and other interpreter colleagues only understood about 60% of Dari. In other words, I interpreted, but there were words that I didn't understand, but that I learned slowly as I did my job. Since I was not able to understand everything, I usually did a summary of what I was hearing, therefore I did not interpret word-by-word. Even to this day, I don't fully understand Dari, I understand and speak around 80-85% of the language, and keep in mind that I worked with that language for 9 years. Dari is a very complicated language.

Another problem was that Spain mostly hired Iranian citizens that had Spanish nationality or lived in Spain. Towards the end, some Afghan refugees who live here in Spain were also recruited, they spoke Dari very well, and they also spoke Pashtu, some of them even Russian. At the beginning, it was hard to understand and communicate with them, but we slowly began to understand each other. You see, there weren't many Afghan refugees in Spain at the time, the majority of interpreters that Spain sent to Afghanistan were of Iranian descent. Normally, those of us who went were by average older than 40, the generation that had fled Iran right after the Islamic Revolution in 1979. The problem with younger Iranians who grew up in Spain was that their command of Farsi wasn't as solid as ours. They weren't used to speaking or hearing the language outside of their homes, they hadn't been used to Iranian customs and codes of social behavior.

The advantage we had on many occasions with our Afghan interpreters was that they understood us very well, because many of them had previously fled to Iran and lived there for some years when the Taliban rose to power. Living in Iran, they understood Farsi perfectly. It is also interesting that, working in Afghanistan, many of the prominent Afghan figures (the police, local governors etc.) had lived in Iran for a short

while due to the Taliban prosecution. When the United States took the Taliban down from power, many of them returned and we eventually established relations with them.

4. What functions did you and your team fulfill within the Spanish mission in Afghanistan?

Spain chose one of the poorest zones in Afghanistan, the Badghis Province, because it was a more or less peaceful zone. It was a poor area, but it wasn't an open warzone like other provinces in Afghanistan. Spain went there for humanitarian aid purposes. When we first got there, there weren't any vehicles or paved roads. It was the closest thing you could find to a village of the Medieval Ages. There, Spain opened a PRT (Provincial Reconstruction Team), a team that had the purpose of reconstructing Afghanistan. Spain went there to open schools and hospitals, giving training lessons to hospital personnel, financing the construction of hospitals and schools, we paved some of the villages, and also provided humanitarian aid to other regions. We also went to schools and gave Spanish lessons, some of the kids we taught later learned Spanish well and ended up working at the base as interpreters. We also started a local radio program for the publicity of the activities we were doing there in Badghis, both in Spanish and in Dari.

5. What reasons and/or motivations drove you to become an interpreter in a zone of conflict? Any monetary, political, adventure-related reasons?

Personally, there were various reasons for me. At the time in which I was hired, I was having personal problems with my boss here in Madrid. I asked for a wage raise and I didn't get it. So, you could say that there was a factor of personal pride in leaving for Afghanistan. Another reason was that, fleeing Iran at a very young age and not being able to return following the Islamic Revolution, I was very drawn by the Oriental culture that I didn't get to experience much. Another factor was that I saw this opportunity as a once in a lifetime experience, I didn't want to miss it, this adventure. Another reason was that the

wage that the Ministry of Defense offered me was relatively good, it was approximately double of what I was being paid in Spain.

6. How well paid are interpreters in conflict zones? According to your experience, is it worth it from a monetary point of view?

Interpreters who worked for the Spanish mission were relatively well paid if you compare them to those who worked for the Americans. Those who worked for the United States got paid between 3,000 to 6,000 dollars per month, depending on whether they only knew Dari or if they also knew Pashtu. I remember an American lieutenant telling us that his interpreter got paid more than he did. The Americans usually employ national interpreters, Iranians or Afghans who have lived in the U.S. for a long time and consider themselves Americans. They get paid fairly well.

Western forces also employ local interpreters of the area. In our case, we had both local and national interpreters. A national interpreter got paid approximately 4,000 euros per month, like a soldier, and a local interpreter began by earning 300 euros per month, later increasing to 700, and finally some of them got to the 1,000-euro mark. Take into account that 1,000 euros in Afghanistan is a lot of money. A teacher or a professor in Afghanistan at around that time got paid 50 dollars per month, a policeman began by getting paid 20 dollars and could increase that to a maximum of 300 dollars per month. For Afghans, a paycheck that ranges between 700 to 1,000 dollars is very high. Many of them, with approximately 6,000 dollars could build a house or acquire it. For us, however, the paycheck was good, but it wasn't a huge advantage in comparative terms, not like it was for the locals.

7. In your career as an interpreter in a conflict zone, have you ever been in a position where you were forced to make a moral or ethical judgement of your job?

No, because Spain was there to help, so I did not have to participate or interpret in any context that was immoral. There wasn't any kind of problematic for me in that sense.

Actually, quite the opposite, it was the local Afghans who abused the generosity of the Spanish personnel working there, in my opinion.

8. How was your relationship with the local Afghans, as an interpreter working for a Western military?

The advantage was that Spain has a very good image abroad, Afghans know us because of soccer. Aside from that, Afghans dislike the Americans, because they see them as invaders or as enemies. They see the Spanish as more like friends, considering the type of activities that we carried out there. Therefore, in fact, the local population helped the Spanish personnel on many cases. In fact, there weren't major attacks towards the Spanish during my time there. This is because the Afghan population clearly could see that the Spanish weren't occupying their country, Spain had gone there exclusively to help them with the reconstruction mission. We didn't have the negative image that the Americans had. The Americans had gone there to carry out 'cleaning operations,' interrogations, street patrols, incursions, going down to villages to capture some Taliban boss etc., and we didn't perform any of those activities. If Spain sent the Army it was only to maintain a certain amount of public order. In other words, Spain sent soldiers to make sure that the Spanish personnel working there in the reconstruction mission were safe.

9. Do you consider that local interpreters in Afghanistan receive enough Western protection?

Some of them allege that they didn't have enough protection in many cases. In our area, however, there mostly wasn't any trouble, it was a safe zone. In fact, they often competed with each other in order to work for us, knowing that there practically wasn't any risk in doing so. Not only were there interpreters at the Spanish base in Badghis, there was also janitors and other types of personnel. Most of them got paid relatively well, although many of them later said that their life was in danger because they were being threatened and Spain had left them there without much help, and that wasn't true. In my opinion, that was

a pretext for them to ask for asylum and refugee status in Spain. Even though the reality is that Spain treated them relatively well. The majority of them were either offered money or an invitation to come to Spain as refugees.

10. Some Afghan interpreters allege that they were promised Western visas in exchange for their services. What is your take on this? Is it actually true?

In the case of Spain, they were offered visas once the mission ended. Spanish authorities offered them either 10,000 euros or to come to Spain as refugees. Within the second option, they would be maintained until they managed to find a job. However, many of them chose the first option in which they opted for taking the 10,000 euros, and later came back to claim migration rights towards Spain. In that sense, you could say that they took advantage of what we were offering them.

11. What about the local interpreters? Where they professional interpreters, did they receive any kind of previous training?

At one point of the mission, Spain had 30 national interpreters and 30 local Afghan interpreters. The majority of the locals did not speak Spanish well. Of the locals, most of them weren't professional interpreters, they were people that took the job out of necessity. Many of them began carrying out janitor jobs, and later learned some Spanish and at one point began to interpret. The majority of the locals had a degree in Hispanic Philology from the University of Kabul. Even then, they didn't speak Spanish properly, most of them actually learned to speak it in the base.

12. In interpreting theory, it is often said that the interpreter is a 'neutral' agent that facilitates communication between two different parties. In the context of the Afghanistan war, do you think this is true?

Not only is the interpreter neutral, he also helps to better the relation between both parts. Maybe, the Spanish go there with a kind of mentality that isn't compatible with that of the

locals, due to their lack of knowledge of Oriental culture or of Afghanistan as a country. The interpreter not only interprets words; he also helps the Spanish to behave accordingly. The interpreter gives advice on what to say and what not to say on a given situation according to the context. The interpreter is a mediator between the mentality of both parties.

13. Did you carry out any duty or job that went beyond the traditional role of the interpreter?

It depends on who you work for. Some of the military personnel are strict and only want you as an interpreter in the strict sense of the word. Other deliberately asked us to give warning if we saw or perceived anything strange, they asked as to orient them on what to say and how to guide the conversation. In the latter scenario, that is when I opened myself more to the situation. Even though I wasn't a local, I had stayed in Afghanistan for a very long time, so I knew the place well, the social codes of behavior, the people etc. Therefore, I often gave advice regarding the security of the situation. I knew perfectly who was a liar, or who was just talking us to ask for a favor.

In other words, beyond the interpreter role, the highest function that I fulfilled was that of an advisor or a mediator. I only did this type of activity if I was asked to do so or if I thought it would be well received by my employer. For example, on many occasions we would arrive at a village, and I knew how to identify the more radical individuals by the clothes they were wearing. On some instances I've had to advice that we leave the place because I thought we could suffer an attack. One time, I gave such advice, and as soon as we got into the vehicles to return to the base, the locals started throwing stones at us.

14. Any recommendation or insight you would give when it comes to training interpreters to work in conflict zones? Is there anything that could be fixed or done better?

I know that the Norwegians had a formal preparation course for their interpreters. It was a basic language preparation. It also consisted on self-defense techniques, weapons usage etc.

To my knowledge, this was only the case of Norwegian interpreters, the rest of the Western countries did not offer any kind of formal training. I'm not entirely sure, what I know for sure is that the local interpreters who worked for the Americans weren't armed, probably because they weren't trusted. In the case of Spain, sometimes, when we went to extremely dangerous areas, we armed the interpreters occasionally under the supervision of a superior. In practical terms, a local interpreter would have the same protection as a national interpreter. Such interpreter could not go out without company, he would wear a bullet-proof vest and a helmet, he was always protected. In terms of the level of danger, there wasn't much, we had adequate protection mechanisms.

15. Any other information, anecdotes, or interesting aspects that you would like to provide about your experience in Afghanistan?

Yes, I would like to say that what people in Afghanistan want is money. People who join the Taliban don't do it for ideological or religious people, that is just a pretext. The Taliban have the poppy and opium production business, that by itself employs more people than the Afghan Armed Forces. Afghanistan is the world's main manufacturer, provider, and exporter of heroin worldwide, it's a business that generates a lot of money. Many young Afghans join the Taliban because of this context, because there is easy money to be made in a country where it is hard to earn an income. As I explained previously, the job of the interpreter gives the average Afghan a good sum of money, and so does the work of the Taliban on many cases.