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METHOD

We created two slightly different versions of an online survey on the platform SurveyAnalytics. The surveys consisted of rating scale questions and a few open-ended questions. The following topics were included: preparation, interview dynamics, interview content, interpretation, and general views. The Finnish Immigration Service shared the survey with all their asylum interviewers and interpreters (as well as external interpreters).

PARTICIPANTS

Interviewers

N = 62 (completion rate 90%) Female 84% Male 13% Prefer not to tell 3% Age M = 34.2, SD= 6.6 Years of education M =18, SD = 1.8 Years working as asylum official: M = 2.9, SD = 2.9, range 0.5-20.3

Interpreters

N = 63 (completion rate 51%) Female 56% Male 40% Prefer not to tell 5% Age M = 47.0, SD= 9.5 Years of education M = 16, SD = 3.3Years working as interpreter: M = 8.8, SD = 6.7, range 0.08-31

RESULTS

We explored patterns and trends in the data descriptively. Key findings were:

- In line with recommendations, most of the respondents agreed that is important to prepare for the interviews as well as to build and maintain rapport during the interview.
- Whereas most interviewers favored open questions over closed questions, approximately half of the interpreters favored closed questions and considered closed questions to be as effective as open question. Almost ¾ of the interpreters found it necessary to ask very specific questions to obtain the relevant information, whereas only a third of the interviewers agreed with this.
- Most respondents found their work meaningful and important, but also emotionally draining and challenging.
- The respondents described various practical challenges in their work (e.g., lack of time and information). Answei

Figure 1 Interview Dynamics

гıy	lore 1. Interview Dynamics				
		Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree
50.	It is important to uphold a positive connection with the asylum seeker.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 44)		10 million - 10 mi	
51.	It is difficult to uphold a positive with the asylum seeker.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 44)			
52.	The interviewer is responsible for upholding a positive connection with the asylum seeker.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 44)			
53.	I try to be empathetic towards the asylum seekers.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 44)			
54.	I think it is best to remain neutral and not show emotions to the asylum seeker.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 44)			
55.	The asylum seeker often only makes eye contact with the interpreter and does not speak to the interviewer.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 44)			
56.	I often find the other professional representative to be distrustful or sceptical of the asylum seeker.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 44)			
57.	The asylum seeker often seems to be distrustful of the interviewer.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 44)			
58.	The asylum seeker often seems to be distrustful of the interpreter.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 44)			
59.	Cultural differences make the communication with the asylum seeker difficult.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 44)			
60.	I find it easy to understand asylum seekers' stories even if there are cultural differences present.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 44)			
61.	The role of the interpreter is only to neutrally translate what is said in the interviews.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 44)			
62.	The role of the interpreter is to be a bridge between languages and cultures.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 44)	-		
63.	It seems difficult for the interpreters (/me) not to take sides in the interview.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 44)			
64.	It seems unclear for the interpreters (/me) what I (/the interviewer) expect of them (/me).	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 44)			
		, 0%	25%	50%	75%



100%

Interviewers' and Interpreters' **Experience of Official Finnish** Asylum Interviews

INTRODUCTION

Recent psychological research has highlighted shortcomings and challenges in asylum interview and decision-making procedures. Analyses of real-life asylum interview transcripts have found that interviewers only partly follow best-practice guidelines for investigative interviewing¹²³. Mainly, interviewers tend to rely heavily on not recommended closed and option-posing questions. However, few previous studies have examined how the interview participants perceive the interviews⁴.

OBJECTIVES

The current study aimed at investigating 1) how asylum interviewers and interpreters in general experience the asylum interviews and 2) how well the perceived practice corresponds with evidence-based interview auidelines.

Figure 2. Interview Content

	Jule 2. Interview Content					
		Disagree	Somewhat disa	gree Neither agree	Somewhat agree	Agree
68.	Typically, asylum seekers need a lot of instructions or guidance to focus on relevant aspects in their stories.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) - TRANSLATOR (n = 38) -		nor disagree		
69.	It is important to first let the asylum seeker describe all their reasons for seeking asylum freely.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) - TRANSLATOR (n = 38) -				
70.	In practise, the free narrative phase takes too long for it to be worth it.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 38)				
71.	I prefer closed questions over open questions.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) - TRANSLATOR (n = 38) -				
72.	I find it difficult to formulate open questions.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 38)				
73.	Based on my experience, closed questions are as effective as open questions in eliciting detailed and honest answers.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) - TRANSLATOR (n = 38) -				
74.	Based on my experience, it is necessary to ask very specific questions to get the information needed.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 38)				
75.		INTERVIEWER (n = 57) - TRANSLATOR (n = 38) -				
76.		INTERVIEWER (n = 57) - TRANSLATOR (n = 38) -				
77.	I (/the interviewer) consciously or unconsciously avoid asking about sensitive and personal topics.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) - TRANSLATOR (n = 38) -				
78.	It is difficult for asylum seekers to talk about sensitive and personal topics.	INTERVIEWER (n = 57) TRANSLATOR (n = 38)				
79.	The difficulty for asylum seekers to talk about sensitive topics is usually related to lack of trust for the interpreter	INTERVIEWER (n = 57)		,		
	is usually related to held of that for the metapreter		0%	25%	50% 75%	100%
				Answers	in Percentages	
				Answer		
				Allswei		
Fig	gure 3. General Experiences			Aliswei		
Fig	gure 3. General Experiences	Disagree	Somewhat disa		e Somewhat agree	Agree
_	gure 3. General Experiences	Disagree INTERVIEWER (n = 56) ⁻ TRANSLATOR (n = 32) ⁻	Somewhat disa	gree Neither agree	e Somewhat agree	Agree
128.		INTERVIEWER (n = 56)	Somewhat disa	gree Neither agree	e Somewhat agree	Agree
128.	l like my work.	INTERVIEWER (n = 56) - TRANSLATOR (n = 32) - INTERVIEWER (n = 56) -	Somewhat disa	gree Neither agree	e Somewhat agree	Agree
128. 129. 130.	I like my work. I think my work is important.	INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) INTERVIEWER (n = 56)	Somewhat disa	gree Neither agree	e Somewhat agree	Agree
128. 129. 130. 131.	l like my work. I think my work is important. I find my job to be too challenging. I often feel emotionally drained and tired after a	INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) - INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) - INTERVIEWER (n = 56) - TRANSLATOR (n = 32) - INTERVIEWER (n = 56)	Somewhat disa	gree Neither agree	e Somewhat agree	Agree
128. 129. 130. 131. 132.	l like my work. I think my work is important. I find my job to be too challenging. I often feel emotionally drained and tired after a workday. Eithening too so many traumatic experiences has made	INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 52) INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 32)		gree Neither agree	e Somewhat agree	Agree
128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133.	I like my work. I think my work important. I find my job to be too challenging. I often feel emotionally drained and tired after a workday. Externing to so many traumatic experiences has made me indifferent to solymu seekers stories in general.	INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) TRANSLATOR (n = 32)		gree Neither agree	e Somewhat agree	Agree
128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134.	I like my work. I think my work is important. I find my job to be too challenging. I often feel emotionally drained and tired after a workdy. Externing tos omany traumatic experiences has made me indifferent to asylum seekers stories in general. I am deeply affected by the stories i harer in my work. I think that it is important to self-evaluate my work	INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) TRANSLATOR (n = 32)		gree Neither agree	e Somewhat agree	Agree
128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135.	Ilike my work. Ithink my work is important. Ifnind my job to be too challenging. Ioften feel emotionally drained and tired after a workday. Externing too so many traumatic experiences has made me indifferent to asylum seekers stories in general. I and neeply affected by the stories i hare in my work. Ithink that it is important to self-evaluate my work Ithink that it is important to self-evaluate my work Itheia as though the quality of my interviews would be	INTERVIEWER (n = 5c) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) INTERVIEWER (n = 5c) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) INTERVIEWER (n = 5c) INTERVIEWER (n = 5c) INTERVIEWER (n = 5c) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) INTERVIEWER (n = 5c) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) INTERVIEWER (n = 5c) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) INTERVIEWER (n = 5c)		gree Neither agree	* Somewhat agree	Agree
128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136.	Ilike my work. Ithink my work is important. Ifind my job to be too challenging. Ioften feel emotionally drained and tired after a workday. Externing too somany traumatic experiences has made me indifferent to asylum seekers stories in general. Iam deeply affected by the stories i hare in my work. Ithink that it is important to self-evaluate my work regularly. Theel as stoogh the quality of my interviews would be improved if had more time for each interview. Ivuodi like to receive more supervision and/or	INTERVIEWER ($n \rightarrow 56$) TRANSLATOR ($n \rightarrow 23$) INTERVIEWER ($n \rightarrow 56$) INTERVIEWER ($n \rightarrow 56$) INTERVIEWER ($n \rightarrow 50$) INTERVIEWER ($n \rightarrow 50$) INTERVIEWER ($n \rightarrow 50$) INTERVIEWER ($n \rightarrow 52$) INTERVIEWER ($n \rightarrow 52$) INTERVIEWER ($n \rightarrow 56$) INTERVIEWER ($n \rightarrow 56$) INTERVIEWER ($n \rightarrow 56$)		gree Neither agree	e Sonewistagne	Agree
128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137.	Ilike my work. Ithink my work is important. Ifind my job to be too challenging. Ioften feel emotionally drained and tired after a workday. Externing too somany traumatic experiences has made me indifferent to asylum seekers stories in general. Iam deeply affected by the stories i hare in my work. Ithink that it is important to self-evaluate my work regularly. Theel as stooghthe quality of my interviews would be improved if had more time for each interview. Ivoudd like to receive more supervision and/or opportunities to discuss difficult aspects of my work. It is easy toge thelp and guidance if something that I	INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 25) TRANSLATOR (n = 25) TRANSLATOR (n = 25) TRANSLATOR (n = 26) TRANSLATOR (n = 26) TRANS		gree Neither agree	e Seneulut apre	Agree
128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138.	Ilike my work. Ithink my work is important. Ifind my job to be too challenging. Ioften feel emotionally drained and tired after a workday. Externing too somany traumatic experiences has made me indifferent to asylum seekers stories in general. Iam deeply affected by the stories there in my work. Ithink that it is important to self-evaluate my work regularly. Itel as stogethe dup the stories there in my work. It hink that it is important to self-evaluate my work regularly. Itel as thogethe quality of my interviews would be improved if had more time for each interview. Ivoudd like to receive more supervision and/or opportunities to discuss difficult aspects of my work. It is easy toge thely and guidance if something that I don't understand arises in an interview/the case. Twould like to take part in more training in interviewing	INTERVIEWER (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 32) TRANSLATOR (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 56) TRANSLATOR (n = 26) TRANSLATOR (n = 26) TRANS		gree Neither agree	* Smewhat agree	Agree

50% 25% 75% Answers in Percentages

CONCLUSIONS

- In general, the views of both the interviewers and interpreters were in line with best practice guidelines
- The interpreters' reported preference of closed questions poses a risk to interview quality
- More collaboration between the interviewer and interpreter and training of interpreters in interviewing techniques is need Interviewers and interpreters should be provided more support and training
- Due to methodological limitations, the current results can mainly be used as a base for further research.

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