Kazakhstani Interpreters' Perceptions and Experiences of COVID-19 Obstacles in

Their Work in the Post-Pandemic Period

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts In Translation Studies

May, 2023

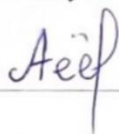Word Count: [13465]

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Declaration

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Technical Assignment

TECHNICAL ASSIGNMENT
For Senior Project
«Kazakhstani Interpreters' Perceptions and Experiences of COVID-19 Obstacles in
Their Work in the Post-Pandemic Period»

I. Justification of the relevance, originality, and novelty of the project.

COVID-19, pandemic started in December 2019, Wuhan, China (Sun, J., et al. 2020). represented a new challenge for the entire world. It altered people's day-to-day lives, the educational system, work life, communication skills, and even areas such as interpretation. Interpreters who used to work mostly offline have shifted to online interpreting during the COVID-19. At the moment, many countries have successfully tackled the pandemic. But the pandemic working environment has remained in many areas. For example, online events, which especially affects the interpretation industry, dividing its format online or hybrid (online and offline interpreting at the same time). This study will investigate aspects of working while interpreting online, such as how quickly they were able to adapt, the difficulties encountered while interpreting, and, most importantly, the realities and experiences that resulted from COVID-19. The findings of paper can be used as a guide for interpreters who have just begun their career path. as well as for similar challenges in the future.

COVID-19 and its implications for the interpretation industry have received little attention in Kazakhstan market studies. The research area on COVID-19 and its implications for the interpretation segment has not expanded since last year. The uniqueness of this work stems from the small number of studies in the interpretation field related to the pandemic.

II. Project object

Purpose Statement

The aim of this research paper is to explore Kazakhstani interpreters' perceptions and experiences of COVID-19 obstacles in their work in the post-pandemic period. The research objectives are as follows: observing interpreters' working habits during COVID-19; examining interpreters' perceptions and experiences during the pandemic period; and identifying changes and facilitators to the interpretation industry through the experience of a Pandemic period interpreters.

Research Questions

According to the purpose of this study, the major research questions are following:

1. How have Kazakhstani interpreters perceived and navigated the changes in the demand for and nature of their interpreting services during and after the pandemic?

Sub-questions of the research are:

1. How do Kazakhstani interpreters perceive the impact of COVID-19 on their work?
2. What are the experiences of Kazakhstani interpreters in adapting to and overcoming the obstacles posed by COVID-19 in their work?
3. What are the changes to the interpretation industry based on the experience happened under the influence of pandemic from the perception of interpreters?

III. Scope, order, and terms of work performance.

Stage 1. Conducting an analysis of the existing literature on the selected topic.
Stage 2. Description of the research methodology, justification for the choice of method (quantitative, qualitative).
Stage 3. Description of the means of data collection (interviewing, document analysis, survey).
Stage 4. Description of the results of the study.
Stage 5. Description of the conclusion, recommendations.

IV. Project quality indicators.

a) The use of relevant regulatory documents and literature at the time of writing the senior project;
b) Writing a graduation project in accordance with the Guidelines for writing a senior project;
c) Compliance by members of the Scrum Team with the requirements of the Academic Integrity Policy regarding anti-plagiarism is implied.

V. The responsibility matrix of MT members.

Explanation: the matrix of responsibility of group members can be built in the form of a table, diagram or otherwise, allowing to determine the degree of involvement of each member in the implementation of each individual design stage.
Project name: **"Kazakhstani Interpreters' Perceptions and Experiences of COVID-19 Obstacles in Their Work in the Post-Pandemic Period".**

Stages	Supervisor's full name	1st student's full name
Stage 1. Conducting an analysis of the existing literature on the selected topic. (Including the introduction part: December 07, 2022 – December 31, 2022) (1) to improve the previous semester's research paper's literature review and find new resources linked to the thesis's goal and questions; (2) to examine the research obtained for the current paper: to offer a basic overview and identify gaps (of each research article), classify them into groups or by subjects or primary ideas—to perform a complete analysis utilizing or developing the literature matrix; (3) to give an impartial critique by comparing and contrasting the first and second phases;	O. Bainova	A. Muratova

(4) using the 1-3 phases, learn the specific and common gaps in all papers and connect them to this master's thesis.		
Stage 2. Description of the research methodology, justification for the choice of method (quantitative, qualitative). (January 01, 2023 – January 15, 2023) (1) to formulate the research questions and purposes correctly and relevant; (2) to indicate research methodology that is matching research purpose and questions; (3) to imply research design strategy; (4) taking into consideration 1 and 2 phases to describe them precisely; (5) to specify research audience, cite and sample selection. And finally add ethical consideration (that is the part of data collection too) during all these processes to avoid dishonesty, harassment, genderism, ageism and sexism;	O. Bainova	A. Muratova
Stage 3. Description of the means of data collection (interviewing, document analysis, survey). (January 15, 2023 – February 15, 2023) (1) to settle on data collection and procedure, that are partly decided in methodology chapter; (2) to indicate number of interviewees, set for participants' characteristics, criteria and substantiate the reason of exact numbers and criteria; (3) to try the data collection procedure (interview process) in order to approbate it; (4) to find interviewees according to 1-2 phases, and get their permission and choose place for questionnaire; (5) to choose data collection instruments (by providing the explanation on their role and try its validity and consistency; (6) to decide where and how to store the gathered data (Where I can store them? How can be data stored? How long can I store them and when should I delete?); (7) to indicate the real limitations during the data collection or after collecting; (8) to do data analysis of gathered information on the basis of research question.	O. Bainova	A. Muratova
Stage 4. Description of the results of the study. (February 15, 2023 – March 15, 2023) (1) to select analysis method either narrative or content; (2) to compare all gathering data collection and divide into two groups which one of them the relevant sources that is answering to my question/s and the second one is other types of research;	O. Bainova	A. Muratova

(3) to write down brief explanation of all results; (4) to show that the findings are clearly providing answers for the research question and directly related to the purpose;		
Stage 5. Description of the conclusion, recommendations. (March 15, 2023- March 20, 2023) (1) to sum up all parts by briefly revising all of them; (2) to show that the thesis was important by answering it question in research world; (3) to provide recommendations to further researchers according the limitations of this paper;	O. Bainova	A. Muratova

Explanation of abbreviations:
S - Supervisor
C1 - Contractor 1
N/A - Not Applicable

1. **Project Completion Form.**

Project Completion Form:

I, the undersigned, agree to use this terms of reference as an agreement on the creation and use of a work of science, concluded between me and KAZGUU University, according to which the student undertakes to transfer to KAZGUU University the exclusive property right to the created work of science, as well as the exclusive right to use the work at its own discretion in any form and under any name in any country in the world, including the right to reproduce the work; distribution of the original or copies of the work through sale or other transfer of ownership; import of copies of the work; public display of the original or copy of the work; other communication of the work to the public; translation of the work into another language; processing and / or other alteration of the work and any other types of use not prohibited by the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan.
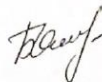
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Abstract

Kazakhstani Interpreters' Perceptions and Experiences of COVID-19 Obstacles in Their Work in the Post-Pandemic Period

The present study aims to explore the role of the COVID-19 pandemic on the interpretation sector in Kazakhstan, with particular emphasis on the transition to remote interpreting that was implemented in March 2020. The practice of remote interpreting was not novel, though rarely employed. The present study seeks to investigate the experiences and perceptions of Kazakhstani interpreters in relation to remote interpreting, prior to the onset of the pandemic, as well as their experiences and perceptions subsequent to the transition to remote interpreting. Employing a phenomenological methodology and semi-structured interviews with a cohort of 10 Kazakhstani interpreters, the present study endeavors to discern the obstacles and transformations that interpreters encountered during the pandemic. The study underscores the diverse ways in which each interpreter responded to the novel working conditions, adapting and enhancing their personal and professional competencies. The findings of this research indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a considerable influence on the interpretation industry in Kazakhstan, which may lead to a growth in the prevalence of distant interpretation and the need for interpreters to be technologically prepared in the future years.

Keywords: COVID-19, simultaneous/conference interpretation, remotre working, the role of pandemic, personal experience, interpreter's experience.

Аңдатпа

Пандемиядан кейінгі кезеңдегі қазақстандық аудармашылардың жұмысындағы

covid-19-ға байланысты кедергілерді қабылдау және тәжірибе

Бұл зерттеу 2020 жылдың наурыз айында жүйелі түрде қолданысқа енген қашықтықтан аудармаға көшуге ерекше назар аудара отырып, Қазақстандағы аударма секторындағы COVID-19 пандемиясының рөлін зерттеуге бағытталған. Қашықтықтан аударма тәжірибесі аудармашылардың арасында сирек қолданылғанымен, жаңа ұғым емес еді. Бұл зерттеу қазақстандық аудармашылардың пандемия басталғанға дейінгі қашықтықтан аудармаға қатысты тәжірибесі мен жұмыс барысын қабылдау, сондай-ақ қашықтан аудармаға көшкеннен кейінгі тәжірибесі мен түсініктерін зерттеуге бағытталған. 10 қазақстандық аудармашылар тобымен жартылай құрылымдалған сұхбаттарды пайдалана отырып, осы зерттеуде пандемия кезінде аудармашылар тап болған кедергілер мен өзгерістерді анықтауға тырысады. Зерттеу әрбір аудармашының жеке және кәсіби құзыреттерін бейімдеу және арттыру арқылы жаңа жұмыс жағдайларына жауап беру тәсілдерінің әртүрлілігін көрсетеді. Бұл зерттеудің нәтижелері COVID-19 пандемиясының Қазақстандағы аударма саласына айтарлықтай әсер еткенін көрсетеді, бұл қашықтықтағы аударманың таралуының өсуіне және алдағы жылдары аудармашылардың технологиялық тұрғыдан дайын болуы қажеттілігін талап етілуіне әкелуі мүмкін.

Түйінді сөздер: COVID-19, іліспе/конференциялық аударма, қашықтан жұмыс істеу, пандемияның рөлі, жеке тәжірибе, аудармашының тәжірибесі.

Аннотация

Опыт и восприятие препятствий, связанных с COVID-19, в работе казахстанских переводчиков в пост пандемический период

Цель настоящего исследования - изучить влияние пандемии КОВИД-19 на сектор устного перевода в Казахстане, уделяя особое внимание переходу на дистанционный устный перевод, который был осуществлен в марте 2020 года. Практика удаленного устного перевода не нова, хотя и применяется редко. Настоящее исследование направлено на изучение опыта и восприятия казахстанских переводчиков в отношении удаленного перевода до начала пандемии, а также их опыта и восприятия после перехода на удаленный перевод. Используя феноменологическую методологию и полуструктурированные интервью с группой из 10 казахстанских переводчиков, настоящее исследование стремится выявить препятствия и изменения, с которыми переводчики столкнулись во время пандемии. Исследование подчеркивает различные способы, которыми каждый переводчик реагировал на новые условия работы, адаптируясь и повышая свои личные и профессиональные компетенции. Результаты настоящего исследования показывают, что пандемия COVID-19 оказала существенное влияние на сектор устного перевода в Казахстане, что может привести к росту распространенности дистанционного перевода и необходимости технологической подготовки переводчиков в последующие годы.

Ключевые слова: COVID-19, синхронный/конференц-перевод, удаленная работа, роль пандемии, личный опыт, опыт переводчика.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

That whole planet is going through a phase of rapid transition right now, and humankind is continuously confronted with new challenges (Haleem et al., 2020). COVID-19 is one of the most recent examples, which took the lives of thousands of people or stop their daily activity (Haleem et al., 2020). Thus, the pandemic has altered the path of all habitants formerly routine activities (Pišot et al., 2020). At the same time Pišot (2020) writes in his article about the changes, while Haleem (2020) divides them into categories such as "economy", "healthcare" and "social". Nevertheless, both authors agree that the pandemic has greatly changed the course of people's lives, COVID-19 measures touched all aspects of daily life, workers began to work mainly at home, all kinds of institutions and centers were closed, events were suspended, in the end people were locked up at home. Like any sector, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a substantial impact on the translation and interpretation industries all over the world (Silvana, 2020). Silvana (2020) underlines one good idea about "remote simultaneous interpretation" (RSI) in her article: translators who neglected this concept prior to COVID-19 were forced to learn to operate remotely because their large list of events and demands simply transitioned to an online format. This is an illustration of the modifications induced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 emphasized the significance of interpreters in all fields. However, most research papers are based on the occurrences of the medical field and understanding: "Language barriers negatively affect patient outcomes, and linguistic assistance is essential when providing adequate healthcare" (Saeki, 2022, p. 341).

This demonstrates the significance of translators and interpreters in the international marketplace. The interpreters serve as the primary medium of communication amongst

experts, who speak different languages (Köksal et al., 2020). Their interpretation may be successful; if not, it might be critical for others. Since the inception of COVID-19, the importance of interpreters and their work has grown (Valero-Garcés et al., 2022). By reason of it most European associations and researchers explored the impact of pandemic in translators and interpreters and one of them was the French Society of Translators (FST). A survey was conducted by the Société francaise des traducteurs (FIT) in June and July of 2020 to evaluate the impact of the pandemic on the translation industry (Chaillou et al., 2021). Half of the participants in the study by Chaillou et al. (2021) anticipated that the pandemic would reduce their income. Part of respondents intended to seek a second job to boost their income, other participants contemplated a re-training program, fifteen percent of survey takers considered temporarily ceasing their interpretation career, and seven percent considered leaving the interpretation field permanently (Chaillou et al., 2021). According to these findings, the pandemic has affected the language interpretation industry professionally and emotionally (Alkhatnai, 2021). In general, the authors illustrate the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the field of interpretation.

Prior to the beginning of the pandemic, the global inclination towards remote interpreting was not common across different regions of the world (Saeki, 2022). As it is, the purpose of the research work is to consider these trends in the context of Kazakh interpreters. The primary aim of this research is to explore the role of Covid-19 on the interpretation sector in Kazakhstan, as well as the perspectives and experiences of interpreters.

Problem Statement

As previously stated, the COVID-19 epidemic is bringing in new experiences and challenges to the interpretation industry. Because the working settings of interpreters have not previously been studied, this topic of inquiry justified additional study from scholars. A brief

assessment of the related studies indicated above and in the section of the literature review revealed that there is no evidence for the role of the COVID-19 pandemic on the working conditions of interpreters in Kazakhstan. The present study endeavors to address this gap by examining the perspectives and experiences of interpreters getting from Kazakhstan during this period. By gaining insight into the challenges faced by Kazakhstani interpreters in their work during the post-pandemic period, The objective of this research is to enhance comprehension of the obstacles encountered by the interpreting sector and to explore potential solutions for future improvement.

Purpose Statement

The aim of this research paper is to explore Kazakhstani interpreters' perceptions and experiences of COVID-19 obstacles in their work in the post-pandemic period. The research objectives are as follows: observing interpreters' working habits during COVID-19; examining interpreters' perceptions and experiences during the pandemic period; and identifying changes and facilitators to the interpretation industry through the experience of a Pandemic period interpreters.

Research Questions

According to the purpose of this study, the major research questions are following:

1) How have Kazakhstani interpreters perceived and navigated the changes in the demand for and nature of their interpreting services during and after the pandemic?

Sub-questions of the research are:

1) How do Kazakhstani interpreters perceive the impact of COVID-19 on their work?

2) What are the experiences of Kazakhstani interpreters in adapting to and overcoming the obstacles posed by COVID-19 in their work?

3) What are the changes to the interpretation industry based on the experience happened under the influence of pandemic from the perception of interpreters?

Research Design/Approach Overview

The present study endeavors to investigate the perspectives and experiences of Kazakhstani interpreters regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. To achieve that goal, a qualitative research design has been selected, given its fundamental features that align with the objectives of the study. To address the research inquiries and achieve the research objective, an interview was conducted with interpreters who were on duty.

Outline

The introductory chapter will provide a contextual overview of the research and outline the research problems, questions, and objectives. Chapter two, the Literature Review, will provide a theoretical foundation based on existing literature related to similar topics. Chapter three, Methodology, outlines the research design, including the place and participants, as well as the data collection process and subsequent data analysis. This chapter incorporates ethical considerations, which are an integral aspect of the research. The forthcoming chapter will comprise the Findings section, which will explicate the data that has been gathered. The next chapter, namely Discussion, will establish a connection between the literature review and the findings. The final chapter, which is the Conclusion, provides a summary of the preceding chapters and highlights the limitations encountered during the course of the research. This chapter will delineate the importance of the study and provide suggestions for future researchers.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter presents a review of the existing literature on the perceptions and experiences of interpreters around the world in order to achieve a more comprehensive understanding and analysis of the topic. The chapter is divided into three separate sections. The first section focuses on contextual empirical research and the employment landscape during the global pandemic. The subsequent section provides an overview of the interpretive sector leading up to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The third section of the research paper examines in detail the circumstances that occurred during the pandemic and its aftermath. This literature review provides an overview of the global interpreter industry by comparing the changes and challenges experienced in the Pre-COVID-19 and Post-COVID-19 eras. The review draws on existing literature to examine the impact of the epidemic on the interpretation industry.

Employment Situation During the Pandemic

Every sort of crisis has the capacity to influence the system of not a few, but the vast majority of activities at all times (Gigliotti, 2020). In 2019, COVID-19 threatened the whole planet (Haleem et al., 2020). The most impacted domain was the transition of workplaces to remote work arrangements. In their study, Bick et al. (2020) analyzed multiple surveys. As per the authors' analysis, the Real-Time Population Survey and several other surveys indicate that prior to the pandemic, the incidence of remote work was infrequent. According to data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), the percentage for the year 2010 was 6.6%. The American Time Use Survey (ATUS) reported a figure of 2.8% for the years 2017 and 2018. The Real-Time Population Survey (RPS) conducted in February 2020 revealed a percentage of 8.2%. The data illustrates the rarity of remote work prior to the beginning of the global pandemic crisis. Also as a consequence of the pandemic, most nations' economy

underwent a recession; the majority of activities and businesses went bankrupt; the education system was halted (Işkin et al., 2022); the unemployment rate increased (Gardiner et al., 2020). Regarding the role of remote work for employees, it has been predominantly characterized in a negative way (Juchnowicz et al., 2021). Various authors, such as Juchnowicz et al. (2021) and Bolisani et al. (2020), have explored the adverse effects of being tied to laptops and phones, reduced interpersonal communication, and challenges in maintaining a work-life balance. Research indicates that in addition to the negative aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic, there exist certain favorable prospects that have arisen as a result of this crisis for human existence. Flexibility is considered as the primary benefit of pandemics, as highlighted in various research studies conducted in Europe and Southeast Asia (Ipsen et al., 2021; Purwanto et al., 2020). The ability to work remotely has resulted in a reduction of commuting time for individuals, as evidenced by studies conducted by Purwanto et al. (2020) and Ipsen et al. (2021). This is due to the fact that individuals are now able to work from any location in the world or from the comfort of their own homes. Purwanto (2020) and Ipsen (2021) have conducted research on the efficiency benefits of working remotely or from home, which represents a second advantage of this mode of work. The survey conducted by Ipsen in 2021 involved the categorization of participants into two distinct groups, namely adults and children. According to Ipsen's (2021) survey, adult participants reported that they had achieved a sense of work-life balance by effectively and efficiently managing their work responsibilities. It is noteworthy that the concept of work-life balance can elicit both favorable and unfavorable outcomes, contingent upon the personal traits of individuals.

Do the aforementioned factors hold equal significance for interpreters? As per the findings of a survey conducted by Fan (2022), the interpretation industry is not excluded from this phenomenon. According to Fan's (2022) study, a group of 41 conference interpreters in

Taiwan, each with over 20 years of experience, were surveyed. The majority of these interpreters expressed frustration with remote simultaneous interpretation. For interpreters, the idea of telecommuting was not new, but many of them were unprepared for it (Silvana, 2020). Amidst the epidemic, the vast majority of interpreters conducted their work in a remote capacity, utilizing online platforms to facilitate simultaneous interpretation (Fan, 2021). The studies conducted by Gardiner et al. (2020) and De Meulder et al. (2021) examined the challenges posed by reduced workload, inadequate payment, changes in technology, and unemployment. Olimat et al. (2022) posit that the acquisition of a contemporary skill set encompassing modern language interpretation, problem-solving, and adaptation can yield advantageous outcomes. The study also investigated the affective and cognitive dimensions of interpreters during and after the consequences of the pandemic.

Interpretation Prior to COVID-19

Before the epidemic, it was not new, however remote interpreting was rare (Moser-Mercer, 2005). Signing official documents such as conference interpreting rules or professional interpretation standards necessitates the presence of interpreters at a designated location (McKibbin, 2021). They are more at ease since they can see the speaker (Moser-Mercer, 2005). Employees used to person-environment seeking for connection with others inside company, as described by Barik et al. (2013). Overnight, COVID-19 revised regulations (Pišot et al., 2020). In the course of the epidemic, achieving interpretation accuracy has become an elusive goal. The quality of an interpretation can be influenced by various factors. This literature review examines various factors that can impact the quality of interpretation during multilingual conferences. In accordance with Ali's (2014) findings, the following items have been identified; The factors under consideration include speed and time lag, attention and memory, direction of processing, gender and number differentiation, dialect and accent

peculiarities, prior knowledge, noise and distraction, visibility of the speaker and the conference room, number of attendees, and attitudes toward interpreters. By exploring the existing research on these factors, this review aims to shed light on the complex nature of interpretation and provide insights into how interpreters can optimize their performance in multilingual settings. In light of the pandemic circumstances, an evaluation of the relevance of interpreting and the interpreter's effort has been conducted. It has been suggested that if the nine identified criteria are considered to be 100%, then a failure rate of 65% can be assumed. This assessment takes into account the factors that have been impacted by the pandemic. In contract with Eshonqulov's (2022) findings, the present study acknowledges the importance of adhering to established rules in interpretation. Additionally, Eshonqulov (2022) proposes a set of commonly accepted settings and/or environment for translators. The three key factors that have been identified as crucial for effective communication are mental alertness, careful observation of speakers and guests, and mental and physical stamina. These factors have been widely discussed in the literature as essential components of successful communication (Eshonqulov, 2022). Mental alertness is important for maintaining focus and attention during communication, while careful observation of speakers and guests allows for a better understanding of their perspectives and needs (Eshonqulov, 2022). Finally, mental and physical stamina are necessary for sustaining communication over extended periods of time and ensuring that all parties are fully engaged in the process (Eshonqulov, 2022). Overall, these factors are critical for achieving effective communication in a variety of settings and contexts. Hence, prior to Covid-19 there were many things to control and learn for interpreters. Kurz (2003) gave general overview for the traditional format of simultaneous interpretation. According to Kurz (2003) there is a common misconception about conference interpreters is that they have very hard jobs. Kurz (2003) claims that the interpretation process

demands a high degree of focus and attention over a lengthy period of time. Stress is sometimes perceived as being exacerbated by the need to handle a range of (sometimes very challenging) subjects, different speakers and accents, the constant threat of failure, and other factors (Kurz, 2003). Looking at the assumptions above and summing them leads to the conclusion that, prior to the pandemic, the interpretation profession was in demand and dynamic, although there were times when the working environment was stressful.

Interpreters During the COVID-19

Moser-Mercer (2005) argues that the interpreting community has traditionally relied on organizational support and training, leading to a potential deficiency in the skills and experience required for remote work. In order to effectively engage in remote interpreting, an interpreter is required to establish a suitable working environment that is devoid of any extraneous sounds or distractions. This involves setting up their own equipment, including headphones, sound, and a reliable internet connection, to ensure optimal performance. Mathews et al. (2022) have identified the aforementioned factors as potential disadvantages of telecommuting. De Meulder et al. (2021) conducted a study to investigate the employment opportunities available to individuals. The researchers administered a poll to a sample of participants, and the results revealed that a significant number of respondents, specifically 57%, reported a lack of employment opportunities. These findings confirm previous research in this area and highlight the ongoing challenges faced by individuals seeking employment. De Meulder et al. (2021) reported that a significant proportion of individuals, specifically 20%, cited the lack of essential tools or technology as a reason for not being able to perform certain tasks at home. De Meulder et al. (2021) conducted a study in which participants reported experiencing difficulty in obtaining equipment due to high demand. Specifically, some respondents expressed a desire to acquire equipment but were ultimately unsuccessful in their

attempts to do so. According to De Meulder et al. (2021), a proportion of 10% of participants cited their status as on-site employees as the reason for their decision. The correlation between translation activities and the education of translators and interpreters has been the subject of numerous research papers. By examining these studies, one can gain insight into the potential benefits of linking these two areas. In 2005, Moser-Mercer conducted a study on the issue of unpreparedness in remote interpretation. Despite the passage of time, this tendency remains a persistent challenge in the field. The concept presented in the user's text is corroborated by the results of a study conducted by Nugroho et al. (2020). The investigation conducted among university students revealed that the majority of them exhibit unwillingness towards online interpretation, indicating a possible resistance to the adoption of this mode of interpretation. The study conducted by Nugroho et al. (2020) has been a recent contribution to the field. However, it is worth noting that prior research may have had some limitations. Over the course of two years, university systems undergo changes that have the potential to impact forthcoming research endeavors. The present study highlights the challenges faced by language interpretation tools and applications in the twenty-first century. The lack of support for these tools during interpretation and the hindrance caused by limited Internet connectivity are identified as major obstacles. The existing literature has provided confirmation of this fact. In prior studies, online platforms such as Zoom, Webex, and Microsoft Teams were commonly utilized for remote communication. However, these platforms were found to be inadequate for interpretation purposes, leading to a novel predicament. According to Chaillou and Van Der Kallen (2021), while there are various platforms available for interpretation services, their effectiveness is limited compared to properly built interpretation services. The latter involves a pair of language interpreters who can interact with each other and provide support and assistance during interpretation without disrupting other participants. According

to recent user feedback, individuals utilizing audio-centric platforms such as Zoom, Webber, and Microsoft Team have reported experiencing notable levels of satisfaction (McKibbin, 2021). Sound shock, cognitive strain, and financial loss have been identified as factors that contribute to the unpleasantness of these services for interpreters (McKibbin, 2021). The comparison and analysis of remote interpreting practices among Kazakhstani interpreters is a pertinent topic for investigation. This study aims to explore the usefulness of this topic as it pertains to the work of Kazakhstani interpreters, who are primarily engaged in remote interpreting.

The preceding sections and relevant research suggest that specific effects of COVID-19 can be anticipated. In a recent survey conducted by the Société française des traducteurs, 526 translators and interpreters were polled regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their profession. The results indicate that more than half of the participants expressed negative sentiments toward the interpretation industry, citing various challenges and prospects that have arisen during the epidemic (Alkhatnai, 2021). Chaillou et al. (2021) reported on a survey conducted by the CSA Institute in April 2020, which aimed to gather information on freelance translators worldwide. In this investigation, data was gathered from a diverse group of participants hailing from 97 unique nations, resulting in a total of 1174 responses. Chaillou et al. (2021) conducted a study that provides context on several noteworthy trends within the interpreting community. The study reveals that individuals with lower income and fewer job prospects tend to have a reduced workload. These findings provide valuable insights into the current state of the interpreting profession. Chaillou et al. (2021) conducted a survey to investigate the impact of COVID-19 on market dynamics. The study found that a majority of the respondents believed that the pandemic had caused a temporary alteration in market dynamics. Specifically, more than half of the participants shared this view. In a recent study

conducted by Chaillou et al. (2021), a significant proportion of respondents reported a

permanent change in their circumstances. Specifically, 25% of participants indicated that their

situation had been permanently altered. However, a smaller proportion of respondents, 10%,

reported no such change. In recent studies conducted by De Meulder et al. (2021), Sameer et

al. (2022), and Kelsey (2021), it was found that language interpreters across the globe are

facing a multitude of challenges. Despite variations in the survey's geographical scope, the

data analysis consistently revealed that language interpreters are experiencing job loss,

inadequate compensation, and a decrease in workload. In the realm of language services, a

dichotomy exists between the roles of translators and interpreters. While the former group

diligently carried out their tasks, the latter group encountered certain challenges. The closure

of numerous establishments providing interpreting services has been observed in recent times.

The cancellation of various events such as trade fairs, conferences, concerts, sports, and

seminars has been reported (eTranslation Service, 2021). Chaillou et al. (2021) investigated

the impact of a certain factor on the income of translators. The findings of their study revealed

a significant effect of the said factor on the income of translators. In a recent study by Chaillou

et al. (2021), it was found that the fear of unemployment has led interpreters and translators to

specialize differently. The authors suggest that this phenomenon may be a result of the

changing demands of the job market, as well as the need for professionals to differentiate

themselves in an increasingly competitive field. These findings eliminated the ways in which

economic factors can impact the career trajectories of language professionals and highlighted

the importance of adapting to changing market conditions in order to remain competitive and

secure employment opportunities. In the context of Arabic-speaking nations, the

aforementioned figures appear to exhibit some variation. In a recent quantitative study

conducted by Alkhatnai (2021), it was discovered that the income of translators, interpreters,

and part-time student translators experienced a notable increase of over 50%. Alkhatnai (2021)

suggests that in order to attract customers, a reduction in prices by 7-8% is necessary. The

workload, conditions, and intensity of work in Saudi Arabia have been noted to exhibit

variability. Mubarak (2021) conducted a study on the factors contributing to the effective

dissemination of information on the pandemic in Arabia. The study found that the presence of

a diverse population, comprising individuals from various nationalities, played a significant

role in this regard. Additionally, the translation of crucial information into languages such as

Urdu, Hindi, Filipino, and Indonesian was identified as a key factor in facilitating the

dissemination of information. The workload of interpreters may exhibit regional variations;

however, the contextual factors surrounding the topics of interpretation are typically uniform.

The impact of the virus has led to the closure of several industries that were previously relied

upon, including tourism and business, as noted by Chaillou et al. (2021). Alkhatnai (2021)

highlights the divergent perspectives among interpreters regarding the challenge posed by the

growing demand for their services in the life sciences, medical, healthcare, and pharmaceutical

sectors. While some interpreters encountered difficulties in coping with this issue, others

perceived it as a chance to expand their professional horizons.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been found to have a significant impact on the language

interpretation community, as evidenced by various studies and reports. The outbreak has led to

a surge in demand for remote interpretation services, as face-to-face interactions have become

limited due to social distancing measures. This has resulted in a shift towards the use of

technology-based solutions, such as video conferencing and phone interpretation, to bridge the

communication gap between individuals who speak different languages. The pandemic has

also highlighted the need for interpreters to have access to personal protective equipment

(PPE) to ensure their safety while providing services. Overall, the COVID-19 pandemic has

brought about unprecedented challenges for the language interpretation community, which have required innovative solutions to be developed in order to continue providing essential services to those in need. The conventional practice of on-site interpretation was prevalent before the pandemic. However, the outbreak of the pandemic compelled a shift towards remote working as a necessary measure. The transition to remote work has presented a number of challenges for interpreters, including a decrease in workload, inadequate compensation, and job displacement. Additionally, interpreters have faced difficulties in adapting to telecommuting due to a lack of necessary skills and equipment. In a recent study conducted by De Meulder et al. (2021), it was discovered that a significant proportion of participants, specifically 57%, were unable to secure employment opportunities due to the absence of essential tools and technology. The utilization of audio-based platforms such as Zoom, Webex, and Microsoft Teams has been found to elicit significant dissatisfaction among interpreters. This is primarily due to the negative effects of sound shock, cognitive strain, and financial loss. The ongoing pandemic has brought about both challenges and opportunities for the interpretation community. One of the positive outcomes has been the acquisition of new skills, such as problem-solving and adaptability. These skills have been essential in navigating the unprecedented circumstances brought about by the pandemic. The investigation of emotional perspectives of language interpreters during the pandemic has been a subject of interest in recent literature. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about significant changes that have impacted the language interpretation sector. As such, there is a pressing need for further research and support to aid in the adaptation of this sector to the current circumstances.

Perceptions of Interpreters' Working Remotely

This section mixes and compares the disadvantages and advantages of COVID-19 based on the research that has already been done. The existing literature has extensively

explored the correlation between the professions of translation and interpreting and factors such as stress, pressure, and working conditions. This has been evidenced by various studies, including those conducted by Dean and Pollard (2001), McCartney (2004), and Schwenke et al. (2014), among others. According to De Meulder et al.'s (2021) recent study, a considerable percentage of sign language interpreters, approximately 67%, reported elevated levels of stress while working remotely from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings of the study indicate that remote interpreting was perceived to elicit a higher degree of stress compared to onsite interpreting. According to De Meulder et al. (2023), respondents indicated that remote interpreting posed physical difficulties that had an impact on their work performance. Furthermore, a significant proportion of participants, amounting to 13%, expressed their need for mental health assistance as a result of the changing requirements of the pandemic on their professional responsibilities (De Meulder et al., 2021). Depression was dominant in times of COVID-19 (Farahani et al., 2021). Previous research has identified social interaction challenges as a significant drawback in the context of pandemic-related work conditions. Specifically, scholars have noted a lack of communication as a prominent issue (Farahani et al., 2021; McKebbin, 2021). In the traditional working format, interpreters are able to engage in team communication and foster an environment of creativity through the facilitation of interesting discussions. According to McKebbin's paper (2021), communication appears to be the most significant aspect of interpreters' work routines. In a recent study, Farahani et al. (2021) noted that interpreters face challenges in their working process due to the lack of opportunities to discuss work moments quickly with clients in a face-to-face setting. This constraint had an adverse impact on the efficacy of their activities. Nevertheless, these limitations gave rise to alternative modes of virtual communication. The findings of Farahani et al. (2021) revealed that interpreters attempted to mitigate the impact of the

situation by resorting to alternative means of communication, such as contacting clients,

and colleagues by using audio or video calls. This demonstrates that interpreters endeavor to

discover methods to adjust. Furthermore, the pandemic-imposed restrictions presented an

additional challenge for interpreters as they were unable to engage in travel. Their work was

restricted to their residence. Nonetheless, the individual highlighted an additional benefit of

online work, which is the ability to expand their client base globally and provide interpretation

services from the comfort of their own home, regardless of their location (McKebbin, 2021).

Another advantage is the potential for time-saving on travel, reduced expenses, increased

quality time with loved ones, and new opportunities for work (Farahani et al., 2021;

McKebbin, 2021). The findings of these studies indicate that the pandemic posed a significant

challenge for interpreters, necessitating their search for, adaptation to, and creation of new

methods in order to sustain their work within the field.

The present research study was prompted by the lack of research on the topic of

interpreters in Kazakhstan, as existing studies primarily originate from Europe, Iran, and the

USA, and only a limited number of works are available from CIS countries and Kazakhstan

itself. Previous research has not yet been successful in observing the use of remote

interpretation following the pandemic. This is anothera problem that requires further

exploration.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter establishes the methodology of the paper that is qualitative research study. The primary goal of this research is to explore interpreters' perspectives and experiences during COVID-19, as well as changes in Kazakhstani interpreters' practice before and after COVID, by addressing the following research questions:

1) How have Kazakhstani interpreters perceived and navigated the changes in the demand for and nature of their interpreting services during and after the pandemic?

Sub-questions of the research are:

1) How do Kazakhstani interpreters perceive the impact of COVID-19 on their work?

2) What are the experiences of Kazakhstani interpreters in adapting to and overcoming the obstacles posed by COVID-19 in their work?

3) What are the changes to the interpretation industry based on the experience happened under the influence of pandemic from the perception of interpreters?

The chapter will focus on key parts of the research paper. I will begin by justifying the research design utilized for this study. The section that follows will describe the sample selection, participants, and the research location. The third section describes the data collection methods utilized in this investigation. The following section explains how data was collected and analyzed. The sixth part addresses ethical issues. In the final section, I will discuss the process of data collection and analysis.

Research Design

The researcher determined a qualitative study design to comprehensively address the research questions and capture all aspects of the subject in a real-world context (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2019) the qualitative research aims to achieve a thorough understanding of a phenomenon or experience by concentrating on social

contexts or interactions, with the researcher engaging in an immersive exploration of the experiences of participants. Given the aim of investigating the perspectives and experiences of interpreters, the researcher considered a qualitative research approach to be a fitting choice for this study.

Also, the researcher is the main instrument of the qualitative research design, as he/she collects and analyses the data by themselves (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). According to Creswell (2018), the data collection for the study consists of observation reports, interview transcripts, and documents. Thus, the researcher investigates the way that interpreters act, their perceptions, experiences, and emotions of them by means of interviewing. The qualitative research entails gathering data at the place where participants consider the topic or problem under research work (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As a result, bringing participants into the lab or sending them tools to complete is inappropriate for qualitative research. Therefore, the approach utilized to collect data is interviewing. Participants in the research were the Kazakhstani interpreters on duty.

This study uses a phenomenological methodology to explore the experiences and perceptions of interpreters about the role of Covid-19 in their work. The goal of phenomenological research is to synthesize people's varied experiences with a phenomenon into a description of its essential nature , so that everyone may better comprehend and benefit from it (Van Manen, 2016). Neubauer et al. (2019) explicate the concept of phenomenology and its various classifications in their scholarly publication. The article describes phenomenology as an approach that can provide answers to research questions by focusing on individuals' experiences and their subjective interpretation of those experiences (Neubauer et al., 2019). The authors posit that there exist two distinct categories of research methodology within the realm of phenomenology, namely transcendental (descriptive) phenomenology and

hermeneutic (interpretive) phenomenology. The field of transcendental phenomenology concerns itself with the subjective experience of an individual with regard to a particular phenomenon, emphasizing the fundamental and universally applicable qualities of said phenomenon (Neubauer et al., 2019). Hermeneutic phenomenology is a research approach that investigates the significance of an individual's existence within the context of their lifeworld. This approach involves interpreting the individual's experiences and examining how their interpretations and meanings impact their decision-making process (Neubauer et al., 2019). The researcher has determined that the most suitable approach for analyzing the work and lived experiences of interpreters, through a comparison of their pre-existing lifeworld experiences is hermeneutic (interpretive) phenomenology. The application of this approach is especially fitting for this investigation as it allows the researcher to acquire the lived experience of interpreters (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019).

Research Site

The interview was carried out through two distinct forms, namely face-to-face (two interviews) and virtual (eight interviews). The interview was conducted in-person at M. Narikbayev KAZGUU University located in Astana (hereafter referred to as the university). Participants P4 and P5 are employed full-time at the university and also work as freelance interpreters. As a result, conducting the interview was convenient for them during their free time hours. The virtual interviews were facilitated through the utilization of the Zoom platform. The study included freelance and agency interpreters, who expressed a preference for online interviews due to the time-saving benefits they offer. Offline interviews did not have any constraints, while online interviews were occasionally interrupted by inadequate internet connectivity, as noted with participants P7 and P10.
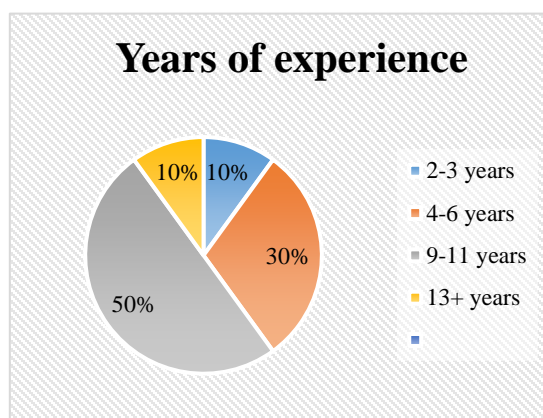
Participants

The participants were chosen purposefully but upon convenience and snow-ball sampling since some interpreters refused invitation. The total count of individuals involved in the study is 10. The original plan entailed conducting interviews with a total of 12 interpreters. Two scheduled interviews were cancelled due to personal and work-related reasons of the interpreters. Criteria-based sampling was employed to conduct the interviews. The selection of interview participants was based on two primary criteria. Firstly, candidates were required to possess a minimum of three years of relevant experience. The rationale for selecting a minimum threshold of three years of experience is that it provides interpreters with sufficient expertise to properly describe and contrast the pre-pandemic and post-pandemic time periods. Secondly, the participants were expected to be interpreters who have worked in the Kazakhstan market. Nevertheless, snowball sampling was also employed during the interview. Due to a lack of response or refusal from several interpreters during the invitation process.

The individual's gender, age, and location were not significant in this investigation. As a consequence, whether the participant prefers to remain anonymous or expresses a desire to disclose his or her name or other information, this would be appreciated (Pritha, B. 2021). The variability in years of experience and the diversity of fields of interpretation are significant among specialists. As mentioned above the main criteria for selecting interviewees were individuals who possessed a minimum of three years of professional experience. Participant 5 (hereafter referred to as "P") has accrued three years of experience in the relevant field. Participants 4, 6, and 7 possess a range of 4 to 6 years of professional experience. Half of the participants have been active in the market for a period of 9 to 11 years. Participant 9 possesses over 13 years of professional experience.

Figure 1

The number of years of experience as an interpreter

As for the working language pairs, English and Russian are the most commonly used languages for interpreters in their professional work. Participant 4 was the sole individual who possessed the ability to interpret and translate in four distinct languages. A minority of interpreters and translators incorporate Kazakh language in their interpretation services. (see Table 1).

Table 1
Working Languages

Languages/ Type of translation	English – Russian Russian – English	English – Kazakh Kazakh – English	English- France	Russian – Kazakh Kazakh – Russian
Simultaneous (conference) interpretation	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	P2, P5, P6, P7	P4	P2, P5, P6, P7
Consecutive interpretation	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	P2, P5, P6, P7	P4	P2, P5, P6, P7
Written translation	P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10	P5, P6, P7, P10	P4	P5, P6, P7, P10

The ten interpreters demonstrate differing degrees of translation involvement. Table 3 presents a visual representation of the diverse fields and spheres in which interpreters provide their services. Participant 2 was the sole interpreter who provided services across a range of topics and domains. Certain interpreters have specific fields of expertise in the domains of interpretation and translation. (see Table 2)

Table 2

Topics/Spheres for translation

Topics/Spheres for translation	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10
International Relations / International organizations	+	+		+	+		+	+		+
Human Rights		+	+	+	+		+	+		
Business and Management		+		+				+		
Migration		+		+	+			+		
Politics, governing bodies	+	+	+			+		+		
Education	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		
Statistics		+			+			+		
Medicine								+	+	+

Data Collection

In order to get a meaningful piece of information, Creswell (2018) claims that data collection involves a series of activities and cycles of doing the same operations. Among the activities he outlined finding a location or someone, acquiring access and reporting, purposefully sampling, collecting data, documenting information, overcoming field obstacles, and storing data. The interview was used for the data collection. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format with open-ended questions. According to Ryan et al. (2009), it is recommended to utilize open-ended questions when conducting research with

participants. This approach enables participants to provide more comprehensive responses in the way they prefer, as opposed to closed-ended questions. The duration of every interview ranged from 15 to 35 minutes per participant. They conducted in Astana at a location that is suitable for interpreters. The participants had the authority to decide which language the interview would be conducted in (English, Kazakh, Russian). Research protocol was the same for all participants.

The pilot version of the interview was carried out online. The interview was recorded using an audio recording device. In instances where the participant declined to record or the recording was terminated or deleted, the interviewer resorted to taking notes. Nonetheless, there was no occurrence of denial.

The interview protocol consisted of a series of 14 open-ended questions that encompassed contextual inquiries and queries pertaining to the interpreters' experiences, perceptions, and transformations throughout and following the pandemic.

The researcher possesses full proficiency in all three languages. Each interview was recorded. Prior to recording the interview, the researcher sought confirmation from the interpreters to ensure that the participants had granted their consent.

Table 3

The process of categorizing the questions in the interview protocol

№	Interview questions	Contextual	RQ 1 (Experience)	RQ 2 (Perception)	RQ 3 (Changes)
1	Can you introduce yourself, your experience in this area? How long have you been working as an interpreter? What languages do you use? What format are you currently working in?	✓			
2	Can you explain the duties of interpreters, what do they do?	✓			
3	What was the general process of Kazakhstan's transition from offline to online formats?	✓			

#	Question			
	Could you please describe it briefly? How fast did things change during the pandemic?			
4	How did you perceive the pandemic, what were your first impressions or concerns?		✓	
5	Did you have any prior experience working as a remote interpreter prior to the worldwide pandemic? Can you describe?	✓		
6	Can you describe your experience as an interpreter during the COVID-19 pandemic? And compare it with the previous experience, I mean pre-Covid situation?	✓		
7	What were your actions to quickly adapt to the work environment and overcome the dramatic changes?			✓
8	What challenges have you faced in your work during the pandemic?			✓
9	What can you say regarding interpreter demand and workload during the pandemic? Were there substantial changes for you?	✓		
10	Has COVID-19 affected your emotional and mental health? What are some examples of moments when your emotional and mental health improved or weakened?		✓	
11	What are some of the advantages (both professional and personal) of working remotely?		✓	
12	What are some of the drawbacks or limitations of working remotely (both professionally and personally)?		✓	
13	In your opinion, were there any opportunities that COVID-19 brought to the interpretation industry? If yes, can you explain your idea more broadly?			✓
14	What is your opinion of remote working, do you like working in this mode, would you continue to work this way, or do you prefer the traditional work format?			✓

Data Management and Data Analysis

The study utilized various tools such as Microsoft Word, recordings, notes, and transcripts in the documentation process. Data management helps researchers perform more structured studies, minimize losing data, and ensure transparency and efficiency (Petrovich, 2018). This study contains data management sets. All obtained and recorded data was reviewed, transcribed, anonymized, and kept digitally. Only researcher and mentor have an access to a confidential Google Document for the study. For interview analysis, each participant was identified (P1, P2, P3, etc.) to minimize misunderstanding.

The initial stage comprised the transcription of both interview and observation notes in written format. The transcriptions of the interviews were conducted verbatim, whereby the original audio recordings were transcribed into written English without changes.

The next stage was coding. The process of coding involves the act of categorizing data by identifying significant elements, differentiating discrete segments of the information, and assigning appropriate labels to organize the data (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2019). The process of content analysis involves the application of either inductive or deductive coding techniques, as noted by Finfgeld-Connett (2014). For this point, the researcher employed a combination of inductive and deductive coding methodologies to classify data, with the aim of facilitating comprehensive analysis and developing a coding framework that is relevant to the research questions. Furthermore, the researcher employed in-vivo and descriptive coding techniques as deemed necessary. Thus, all 10 interview transcriptions were coded, categorized and grouped.

The subsequent course of action corresponded with the codes identified in the literature review. Following the process of categorization, a scholarly investigation was conducted to analyze their interconnections.

Ethical Considerations

It is critical to thoroughly evaluate ethical factors while planning and conducting research to ensure that the study is carried out in a responsible and ethical way (Bhandari, 2021). Ethical consideration steps for this paper was:

1) Informed consent (Bhandari, 2021) entails ensuring that participants are completely informed about the study (the theme, purpose, questions, and design) and have given their agreement to participate voluntarily. The informed consent was provided to all participants and signed by each of them.

2) Confidentiality and privacy (Bhandari, 2021) - protecting participants' personal and sensitive information and honoring their right to privacy. The data collected shall not be disclosed to any third-party entities.

3) Avoiding misleading methods and inaccurate information during the study process (Bhandari, 2021). Consequently, audio recording and transcription were utilized for all interviews.

4) Risk of harm (Bhandari, 2021) - limiting any possible injury or negative influence on study participants or others.

5) Conflict of interest (Bhandari, 2021) - avoiding any competing interests that may compromise the research's validity or impartiality.

6) Fairness and nondiscrimination (Bhandari, 2021) - ensuring that all participants are treated equally and without bias based on variables such as race, gender, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic background.

7) Taking responsibility for the wellbeing of participants and ensuring that they get the right assistance and resources during and after the study (Bhandari, 2021).

8) According to Bhandari (2021), plagiarism is an ethical issue, hence all original
    sources shall be mentioned. In two years, interview evidence will be destroyed.
    The study findings will be delivered in a year, as intended for a Masters' Thesis.

In conclusion, this chapter on methodology detailed the methods used to answer the study's research questions on how the interpreting industry has evolved since the epidemic. Qualitative research with phenomenological methodology was chosen for this research paper, and data was collected through semi-structured interviews with 10 Kazakhstani interpreters. Data management, analysis, and ethical considerations were also discussed in detail. This methodology chapter provides a comprehensive understanding of the steps taken to conduct the study and ensure that it was conducted in a rigorous and ethical manner.

Chapter 4: Findings

The present chapter discusses the findings outlined in this paper pertaining to the aforementioned subject matter. The researcher presents an overview and analysis of the findings obtained from the information collecting procedure. In order to answer the research topic, 10 experienced interpreters were interviewed. The analysis was classified into four discrete categories predicated on the types of inquiries presented, specifically pertaining to the circumstances of Kazakhstani interpreters prior to the onset of the pandemic. The following paragraph describes to the transitional period during shifting from a traditional offline mode of work to an online format. The subsequent section of the text pertains to the period of the pandemic and comprises sub-sections that delve into the perspectives and experiences of interpreters during this time. Subsequently, the following section delves into the changes that have arisen within the interpretation sector as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Appendix contains a comprehensive list of all the inquiries.

Interpreters Prior to the COVID-19

Before the start of the pandemic, a significant majority of interviewees, specifically 70%, lacked any prior experience with remote work. Merely those individuals who had previously engaged in working remotely within government organizations, specifically participants 1, 4, and 8, demonstrated familiarity with the concept. Prior to the onset of the pandemic, remote interpretations were predominantly conducted through telephonic or Skype-based means. This form of interpretation was primarily characteristic of high-ranked government entities, specifically P1 and P8. In certain instances, the mode of communication involved a series of successive telephone interpretations that were conveyed in a concise manner. During that period, translators exhibited reluctance towards undertaking such tasks, owing to the complexity of the interpretation process and the additional effort required due to

the advent of the Internet and other related factors. From the very beginning of the pandemic, remote interpretation necessitated a significant degree of responsibility on the part of interpreters, and the scope of interpretation was notably limited in comparison to the current COVID-19 era.

Each person in the profession possesses a unique comprehension of their professional obligations within a given field. Conference and simultaneous interpreters are expected to adhere to fundamental guidelines. An illustration of immediate language interpretation is when the interpreter starts the interpretation process within a few seconds of the speaker's getting started speech, as explained by P1, P2, and P6. The act of interpreting encompasses the conveying of meaning from the original language to the target language (P3, P5, P7) with the aim of facilitating smooth and appropriate communication (P1, P8). The provision of a reliable language service (P4) results in time-saving for representatives in diverse languages. Interpreters serve as intermediaries between diverse cultural and linguistic contexts, facilitating communication and understanding (P4). It can be observed that interpretation encompasses not only linguistic proficiency but also necessitates specialized knowledge to effectively communicate intended significance. Therefore, it is imperative to comprehend the context and terminology utilized in the meeting (P6). Interpretation is a cognitive process that necessitates focus and concentration. However, both internal and external factors that arise during the interpretation can pose obstacles and hinder the quality of the interpretation, as noted by P6 and P7. All participants expressed their opinions and debated, yet they all agreed that interpreters connect people and cultures.

Prior to the beginning of the pandemic, interpreters commonly enjoyed the advantageous aspects of their profession, such as the opportunity to travel both domestically and internationally as noted by participants 1 and 8. Interpreters have reported experiencing a

communicative atmosphere and gaining additional knowledge through exposure to cultural differences when traveling or attending events (P1 and P4). Regarding the operational procedures, the interpreters' primary responsibility was to ensure the quality of interpretation. The majority of technical and logistical aspects were typically coordinated by the event organizers (P5, P6). Nonetheless, it is worth noting that the coin possesses an alternative aspect, whereby certain interpreters experienced moments of stress when interpreting at government events of significant importance (P1, P2, P8). The signatories were required to execute various documents pertaining to confidentiality and responsibility, thereby rendering the entire process a source of stress.

Transition Period from Offline to Online Format of Working

The answers provided to this question are essentially the same. When everything was turned off, the interpreter appeared to be completely lost on both a personal and professional level, and the level of uncertainty increased (P3, P4, P8). COVID-19 started too quickly, forcing individuals to stay at home for a time; meetings and conferences were canceled, and interpreters were literally left with "nothing." Participant 3 even predicted that it would go on for a long period in this instance. There was a brief halt to all operations in Kazakhstan. Subsequently, individuals began to contemplate the matter. Initially, entities and individuals who employ interpreters began to recognize the feasibility of conducting consecutive interpretation sessions through digital platforms such as Skype and WhatsApp (P8). Subsequently, the isolated population discovered the feasibility of virtual gatherings and the virtual conferencing tool Zoom incorporated its interpretation feature.

"And when they found out that zoom integrated its interpretation function, everyone started to switch to the Zoom and it happened. You know, literally in a night one has no assignments at all and the next day you started to being booked up for specific dates"

(Participant 8). This identified the beginning of remote interpretation (RI). But not everything seemed to be going well with RI. A number of interpreters experienced novelty and reported experiencing stress and anxiety in the initial online interpretation sessions (P6, P9). Nevertheless, the interpreters were compelled to adjust to the circumstances and gradually transitioned to performing their duties through a digital platform.

The Role of COVID-19 on Interpreters' Experiences During the Pandemic

Prior to pandemic, interpreters did not have such an experience, as conference interpreters typically operate from enclosed booths. However, it should be noted that participants 1, 4, and 8 were assigned multiple tasks through the usage of phone calls and the chat platform, Skype. These modes of interpretation were extensively employed in the realm of governance. Despite the availability of online interpretation services, the task was deemed tough due to technical issues such as abruptions and network problems, resulting in an unwillingness among individuals to undertake the responsibility of online interpretation (P8). The three interpreters posit that telephone or Skype interpreting diverges significantly from the practice of RI.

Participant 1's response defines the beginning stage of remote interpreting, wherein one downloads all available applications and endeavors to comprehend their functionality. The initial phase of adaptation was experienced by all interpreters. However, the experience varied for interpreters who work as freelancers or for agencies. Agency translators were more secure because they were equipped in terms of technical equipment and didn't waste time correcting mistakes. Freelancers encountered greater difficulty in their work, as they carried the responsibility of ensuring the quality of the internet, technology, and interpretation without external support (P6, P9).

Zoom served as the primary working platform used by the interpreters. Several platforms were available for the interpreters, including Kudo, Interprefy, and Microsoft Teams. However, Zoom was deemed the most suitable option, as it underwent improvements over time and facilitated seamless communication among interpreters (P2, P5, P10). "Over time, more platforms appeared and existing ones adapted to new requirements" (P5).

The interpreters started their work from their own homes (P1) which marked the starting point of all experiences. The process of interpretation remained the same, as interpreters were required to deliver interpretations of high quality. The aspect that distinguishes is the technical side. In addition to linguistic proficiency, participants were required to possess technical skills such as timely activation or deactivation of microphones (P1). The individuals experienced a state of social isolation whereby their ability to engage in interpersonal communication was restricted (P2). Prior to the pandemic, they had the opportunity to expand their social network by meeting new individuals and establishing relationships. However, during the pandemic, their ability to interpret social interactions as opportunities for socialization was limited, resulting in a reduction of social engagement (P3).

Participants 2, 8, and 9 provided interpretation services to high-level officials through offline means, adhering to conventional work formats. In contrast to the pre-COVID-19 era, individuals were required to undergo multiple COVID tests prior to interpretation, and were mandated to utilize personal protective equipment such as masks, gloves, medicinal caps, and surgical boots. The outbreak of the pandemic has had a significant impact on the course of interpreters' professional activities.

In contrast to the conventional interpretation format, interpreters have increasingly received more requests per day due to the ability to seamlessly transition from one online session to another (P5, P6, P8, P9). At that point, divergent viewpoints and personal

experiences become apparent. During the very beginning of the lockdown period, there was a notable absence of demand or workload. Subsequent to that interval, workload reduction was observed for 50% of the participants, while the remaining 50% experienced an increase in demand. Several interpreters (P1, P2, P5, P8) were immediately booked up, while some (P3, P6, P10) began considering the market's additional field until the return of favorable conditions. However, for the colleagues of the interviewed interpreters, the COVID-19 pandemic identified a turning point in their professional path. Regarding this matter, the perspectives of novice interpreters vary. Participant 5 in the study was identified as a freelance interpreter who expressed an opinion that the demand for interpretation services was on the rise. It is noteworthy that this interpreter began her career in remote interpretation. According to P7, who was employed at a translation agency, freelance interpreters faced significant challenges as the majority of orders were directed toward them. Although individual preferences may vary, the consensus among interpreters is that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted a significant need for the services of interpreters, particularly in the context of remote work.

The interpreters encountered various external challenges. One of the primary challenges encountered was the lack of familiarity among the audience with virtual meetings, which can be attributed to technological limitations. In addition to technological constraints, the quality of interpretation during the events was impeded by audience disruptions and interruptions. "Like people sometimes distracting us from our business because they do not know how to turn on or turn off the interpretation feature, sometimes they text and you can chat about some random things that you're not responsible for" (Participant 4). The possibility exists that participants of the event may inadvertently neglect to deactivate microphones, resulting in auditory interference, or similarly, fail to disable cameras, leading to visual

disruption. Moreover, the individuals in question exhibited a lack of familiarity with Zoom's interpretation feature, specifically with regard to switching to an alternate channel for the purpose of accessing the interpreter's sound. As a result, it is possible to disrupt event coordinators or speakers. This posed a significant challenge for the interpreters.

The next concern related to the possibility of event organizers lacking a comprehensive understanding of their obligations in facilitating the smooth interpretation process. This could result in a misguided assumption that interpreters carry exclusive responsibility for technical aspects, such as configuring the interpretation function. Misunderstandings may arise and interpreters may be subjected to an excessive number of responsibilities, leading to disadvantages. These two factors posed a significant challenge for the interpreters.

Interpreters' Perceptions of COVID-19

 "Oh, wow, we finally have this perfect time to just spend together to do some like common activities!". One week past and it was like "Oh no, I can't do this anymore!". Because like this anxiety and stuff, all the negative things that were connected with certain uncertainty, like where it will lead to what we are supposed to be doing in the future, how the market will change, will be able to still like making money. …The period of time, but all the interpreters we really had to survive for a certain period of time." – Participant 4.

The aforementioned excerpt from the interview with Participant 4 encapsulates the responses of all other interpreters to the posed inquiry. The thing that happened at the beginning of the pandemic was horrible for the interpreters. The individuals expressed worries regarding the state of health of both their loved ones and their own well-being. Participant 1 even caught this COVID-19 by himself. Another reason for concern was their income; the usual working routine was stopped for all of them for the first month of COVID-19. They even started to gain perspectives in other sectors in order be in safe place: Participant 3 started

to get orders for written translation work, and Participant 8 started her career at the university as a teacher.

Advantages of Interpreting Remotely

The acquisition and refinement of both soft and hard skills. As per the remarks of the interpreters, they were enhancing their proficiency in both interpersonal and professional abilities. The individuals successfully adjusted to the unusual work structure, acquired proficiency in using technology for optimal productivity, and enhanced their ability to cope with challenging situations. The interpreters acquired the ability to overcome the challenges of being far apart by using digital communication channels to interact with their clients, peers, relatives, and acquaintances (P3, P4, P5, P6, P8).

The ability to be flexible and engage in multitasking. Given a reliable internet connection and appropriate technical equipment (such as P4 or P9), it is feasible for an interpreter to operate remotely from any location. There was an increase in the daily volume of requests. If an interpreter was previously limited to attending only two events, they may now be able to participate in multiple events during remote interpreting. Consequently, the participants were able to save time on commuting and preparing for going out.

The level of comfort experienced during work. As previously stated, they were able to save time in preparation for their appearance. During breaks, the interpreters were able to relax in a comfortable setting and enjoy refreshments such as coffee and sweets. Interpreters were granted permission to deactivate their cameras during virtual events, thereby enhancing their work experience comfortable.

Emerging market. A tendency towards loss of clients was observed, nonetheless, all ten interpreters acknowledged the availability of the new market to interpreters and translators alike. The issue of flexibility arises in the context of Kazakhstani interpreters being sought

after and required in international markets, which consequently enables them to engage in online work.

Reducing stress levels. The increased flexibility, ability to work remotely without the need for physical appearance preparation, acquisition of new clients, and greater financial autonomy have been found to contribute to a reduction in stress levels experienced by interpreters. There existed no apprehensions regarding lateness for the occasion; being stuck in traffic resulted in both timing and financial preservation, thereby engendering a sensation of slowing down.

Disadvantages of Interpreting Remotely

The main limitation was maintaining the quality of interpretation. Numerous variables were impeding the quality of sound, the stability of the Internet connection, and the efficacy of communication. In the event that two interpreters hailing from distinct localities experience a brief delay in their communication, resulting in a perception among the organizers or audience that the interpreters have ceased translating or are experiencing technical difficulties (P5).

No authentic experience. **"**Home is boring. I enjoy my job as an interpreter because I get to meet new people, see new things, and learn new things. When you work remotely from home, just looking at your computer without being able to see the emotions or the actions you don't get the authentic experience." – Participant 8. That was the very boring part of working remotely. One of the most encouraging aspects of working as an interpreter is the opportunity to travel, explore new places, and gain cultural insights, particularly when working in a country where the target language is spoken. Thus, interpreters faced lack of the cultural experience (P1, P8).

"Atmosphere may overwhelm. It's important because we're sociable and our work is exciting—one day you're interpreting in Ministry, the next in a factory, and you continually

see this switching off visuals, surroundings, or like you're interpreting it anywhere near the historical landmarks. Another challenge was interpreting in your little flat" (Participant 4). The lack of the communication was really trouble for the more 50% of interpreters. The initial comfort zone turns to them for boring place. The balance between work and personal life was disappeared. The interpreters were required to remain in isolation to prevent any disturbances or disruptions. However, this measure resulted in inconvenience for the interpreters' families, as parents had to wait in cars or take walks outside. Additionally, interpreters who were parents had to either stay on their balconies or send their children to stay with relatives.

The terms "anxiety" and "stress" were found to be the most commonly used words in the inquiries analyzed. The initial matter pertains to health concerns, specifically, the interpreters who caught COVID-19 experienced a significant decline in their memory capacity (P1). The individual experienced rapid exhaustion and a shift in their long-term memory. The second most commonly cited response was that participants expressed concern for their loved ones (P6, P4, P9, P10). The aforementioned phenomenon had an impact on the cognitive functions of the interpreters, resulting in reduced levels of focus and concentration during the course of their professional duties (as referenced in P6 and P7). In addition to Participant 5 reported experiencing adverse effects on sight health, spinal alignment, and lack of oxygen consumption resulting from continued computer usage. In addition, concerns relating to electricity, technological fails, and possible disturbances from family members, such as children's noise or other cohabitants, contribute significantly to heightened levels of anxiety and stress during the process of interpretation. At this point, the boundaries between personal and professional spheres were called into question.

Nonetheless, with regard to dedicating additional time to their families, interpreters experienced a sense of fulfillment and relaxation. According to Participants 4, 8,

and 7 individuals hold the belief that while a career holds significance, it is not considered as essential as the value placed on human lives and familial connections. Overall, the period presented an opportunity for personal development in terms of emotional maturity, as well as learning the importance of balance and effective prioritization.

The Consequences (Changes) of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the Interpreting Field

Personal Aspects

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to interpreters enhancing their soft skills, including but not limited to networking, creativity, conflict resolution, and problem-solving. These skills have become more prominent due to the visible impact of the pandemic. The phase of adaptation is commonly linked with difficulties in interpersonal communication and establishing professional connections. As aforementioned, interpreters function in pairs. In this regard, a group of interpreters initiated the practice of conducting home visits to ensure the delivery of superior interpretation services (P2). Furthermore, alternative means of socializing with peers were developed, such as utilizing WhatsApp messaging or employing secondary devices for the interpretation process in order to know whether one's partner has completed a task. Overall, the COVID-19 pandemic has taught interpreters the importance of addressing issues through lockdown measures (P1).

Furthermore, a significant takeaway from the experience was the realization that the value of every individual's life is of the highest importance. The demands of daily routines, time pressure, and professional pursuits can lead individuals to overlook fundamental human values. The ongoing pandemic serves as a poignant reminder to interpreters to prioritize their personal relationships, cherish moments spent with loved ones, and strive for a healthy work-life balance. The individuals in question hold the belief that while a career holds significance,

it is not of paramount importance when compared to the value of human lives and familial

relationships, as evidenced by participants 4, 7, and 8.

Professional Aspects

The very first outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic is the implementation of a hybrid

work format. Following the pandemic, the utilization of remote interpreting persists, as it has

been posited to be advantageous for all parties involved, including organizers, interpreters, and

audiences (P4, P8, P9). The utilization of hybrid format enables interpreters to operate without

limitations imposed by time-based and geographic factors.

In light of technical considerations and equipment, it has been observed that over 50%

of interpreters have made investments in premium headsets and microphones (P2, P4, P8)

during the pandemic. Additionally, a small number of interpreters have acquired new laptops

(P5, P7). However, the previously mentioned purchasing did not present any challenges as all

the research participants understood the importance of investing resources in technological

progress and acknowledged it as a sustainable investment. Interpreters have acquired a

considerable degree of technological expertise, as noted by P1, P6, and P8. The significant

advancement of technology has led to the development of technologically sophisticated

interpreters who possess a strong belief in their ability to adapt to future challenges.

Facilitating remote work enables individuals to strengthen their technological proficiency.

The advent of technological progress and the emergence of online interpreting have

presented interpreters with novel opportunities, expanded work settings, and new demand for

their services (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7). Currently, a subset of interpreters (P3, P5, P8, P10) are

engaged in remote work for international corporations and institutions. Physical appearance is

not a necessity for them. The utilization of remote interpreting has facilitated the extension of

international communication by interpreters, even in virtual settings. As a result, the increase

in workload has a significant impact on the income of interpreters. The potential for financial

gain is heightened. Participant 8 articulated that the digital realm has eliminated geographical

boundaries, enabling individuals to traverse borders at their convenience.

Overall, the research findings can be interpreted in a positive manner. The study

involved 10 participants who were interviewed to gather their perspectives on the impact of

COVID-19. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, the participants expressed positive

perceptions and experiences; "The market was very flexible and competitive, and the

interpreters managed to adopt quickly despite the challenges" (P4).

Chapter 5: Discussion

The present research explores the perspectives and experiences of interpreters from Kazakhstan regarding the obstacles caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The objective of the study was to investigate a primary and three sub-questions. The questions are:

How have Kazakhstani interpreters perceived and navigated the changes in the demand for and nature of their interpreting services during and after the pandemic?

Sub-questions of the research are:

How do Kazakhstani interpreters perceive the impact of COVID-19 on their work?

What are the experiences of Kazakhstani interpreters in adapting to and overcoming the obstacles posed by COVID-19 in their work?

What are the changes to the interpretation industry based on the experience happened under the influence of pandemic from the perception of interpreters?

The present chapter has been structured into three distinct sections for the purpose of providing a comprehensive and coherent analysis of correlation of literature review and findings chapters. The initial segment of the discourse centers on the perspective of interpreters regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. The subsequent section delves into the experiential realm of interpreters. The final segment of the discourse pertains to the changes that have transpired within the interpretation sector as a consequence of the global pandemic.

Interpreters Working Routine Before the COVID-19

Merely 30% of the research subjects exhibited prior familiarity with telecommuting. The present observation aligns with the research conducted by Moser-Mercer (2005) and Bick et al. (2020) which indicates that remote work is not a common practice. Just before the beginning of the worldwide pandemic, a significant proportion of interpreters in Kazakhstan expressed reluctance to participate in remote interpretations, due to increased responsibility

and the possibility of compromised interpretation quality as their main concerns. As highlighted by P1 and P8 in the context of Kazakhstan, interpreters have been observed to engage in remote interpreting activities within governmental institutions, leveraging communication tools such as telephones or Skype for the interpretation process. These individuals have characterized this approach as old-fashioned.

According to Eshonqulov's (2022) study, mental alertness, careful observation of speakers and guests, as well as mental and physical stamina are identified as crucial factors for effective communication. The subsequent topic for discussion pertains to the primary facets of interpretation, namely the presence and communication exhibited by interpreters, event organizers, and the audience during the event. According to the viewpoints of participants of this reserch, the fundamental aspect of the event is the exchange of ideas and the establishment of professional interaction with both the audience and the native speakers. This communication has the potential to enhance the interpreters' understanding of the target language speakers and broaden their knowledge.

The study's participants emphasized that prior to the pandemic, interpreters prioritized the facilitation of seamless communication among individuals who spoke different languages. To achieve accuracy, individuals had to maintain focus and concentration. Kurz (2003) asserted that the interpretation process necessitates prolonged and intense concentration to guarantee the delivery of high-quality interpretation. Nevertheless, interpreters are not exempt from encountering stressful situations. Kurz (2003) identified several factors that may impact interpreting performance, including accent, interpreter anxiety, and complex subject matter. Nonetheless, as per the interviewees' responses, these facets are intrinsic to novice interpreters. According to the interviewees who had an average of 5-6 years of experience, the most stressful situations were when they had to interpret at events involving high-ranking officials.

This was due to the fact that the signatories were required to execute various documents related to confidentiality and responsibility, which made the entire process a source of stress. In general, the literature and research findings concur with the suggestion that the interpreting industry exhibited dynamism and was in high demand prior to the dawn of the pandemic.

Interpreters' Perceptions and Experience of COVID-19

The impact of COVID-19 on the perspectives of interpreters has been noteworthy. Soft skills pertain to an interpreter's personal qualities, communication proficiencies, and social aptitudes that improve their efficacy in their occupation. Olimat and colleagues (2022) identified problem-solving and adaptation as significant factors. As per the accounts of the interviewees involved in the study, this was categorized into seven distinct segments. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the soft skills of interpreters, as evidenced by several key factors.

The ability to adapt and be flexible is a crucial skill in various contexts. The COVID-19 pandemic has compelled a swift shift towards remote interpreting, thereby demanding interpreters to promptly acclimate themselves to novel technologies, platforms, and work settings (Silvana, 2020). Interpreters have demonstrated adaptability in modifying their communication modalities and strategies to suit remote environments, which entails coping with auditory lags, technological malfunctions, and interpreting in the absence of visual prompts. The aforementioned characteristics are applicable to interpreters from Kazakhstan as well. The outbreak of the pandemic resulted in a state of "uncertainty" for the local interpreters in various domains of their professional and personal lives. It was last for a month or 2 months. Nevertheless, the research participants demonstrated the ability to adjust and maintain their work regimen.

The utilization of remote interpreting has necessitated interpreters to enhance their communication and active listening abilities to guarantee precise interpretation. They must focus on deciphering speech patterns, tones, and nuances through digital platforms while maintaining effective communication with all participants in the virtual setting. Ali (2014) identified active listening, accents, and tones as crucial elements for providing interpretation of superior quality. According to Eshonqulov's (2022) findings, maintaining mental acuity when addressing an audience is a crucial factor in establishing effective communication.Emotional Intelligence: Interpreters have faced unique challenges during the pandemic, such as interpreting sensitive or emotional conversations related to COVID-19, illness, or loss. Developing and utilizing emotional intelligence has become crucial for interpreters to empathize with speakers, manage their own emotions, and deliver interpretations with sensitivity and professionalism.

Technological Proficiency: The shift to remote interpreting has necessitated a greater level of technological proficiency among interpreters. They have had to become adept at using various video conferencing platforms, interpreting software, and digital tools to facilitate smooth communication and overcome technical obstacles (Chaillou et al., 2021). The main platforms for the interpretation were Zoom, Webex, and Microsoft Tems. However Kazakhstani interpreters' main working platforms was Zoom. As for Zoom, the thing that differ from the west interpretation mode and CIS and Kazakhstani market was that at the very beginning Zoom did not have Kazakh or CIS countries language in the list of interpretation channels that confuse both interpreters and audience. Nevertheless, Zoom time by time made updating for the seek of users. The research participants expressed the necessity of interpreters to establish appropriate work settings and obtain the essential equipment and technology for achieving optimal performance. The statement underscores the possibility of inadequacy in

competencies and expertise for remote work among interpreters. The arguments presented in the text are supported by various research studies conducted by Moser-Mercer (2005), Nugroho et al. (2020), and De Meulder et al. (2021).

Interpreters After the COVID-19

This chapter examines the challenges encountered by interpreters, their working processes, and the role of the COVID-19 pandemic in their profession. The study highlights the transition of Kazakhstani interpreters to online platforms due to the pandemic and the obstacles they faced. The emergence of an unfamiliar occurrence format, referred to as "hybrid," has been attributed to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. This format combines both offline and online components to create a blended experience for participants. Hybrid conferences refer to events that incorporate both physical and virtual elements (Puccinelli et al., 2022).

The remote interpretation modality presented a novel and demanding format for all interpreters. This remote type of interpretation was full of responsibility prior to pandemic, that is why it was rare within Kazakhstan as well as it described by Moser-Mercer (2005). At the very beginning of the pandemic, all interpreters were left without any means. The experience caused a sense of uncertainty and shock among them. Subsequently, within a few weeks, all interpreters abruptly transitioned to an online mode of operation and began to receive an increase in customer bookings. The period of adaptation varied among interpreters, with some being able to readily adjust to working with technological equipment, while others had to purchase new devices to ensure optimal interpretation quality. Zoom was the primary platform utilized to offer interpretation services. However, the precise functioning of Zoom needed a reliable internet connection and excellent quality technological equipment. The pandemic has resulted in interpreters experiencing anxiety and stress. Nevertheless, remote

employment has offered several professional and personal advantages. The implementation of

remote interpretation presents several benefits, including improved cost effectiveness,

adaptability, and increased accessibility for the foreign market. A significant proportion of

respondents expressed their expectation that remote interpretation services would remain

highly in demand beyond the pandemic period, especially for global conferences and

meetings. However, certain individuals acknowledged the significance of interpersonal

communication and opined that virtual interpretation must not entirely replace in-person

interpreting.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The study's primary focus was to investigate the encounters of interpreters from Kazakhstan amid the COVID-19 outbreak. Ultimately, the research findings were presented to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic. The study examined the effects of the pandemic on interpreters' work, their ability to adapt to new challenges, and the changes that occurred in the interpretation industry. This was achieved through a primary research question and three sub-questions. The significance of interpreters in facilitating efficient and culturally suitable communication among individuals who possess distinct linguistic backgrounds is widely acknowledged. The act of interpretation necessitates not only a high level of linguistic competence but also specialized expertise to aptly convey intended meaning. According to the study, interpreters encountered difficulties when shifting to digital platforms, but eventually managed to adjust. The advent of hybrid conferences has been ascribed to the repercussions of the pandemic, which entail the amalgamation of in-person and virtual elements to create a blended encounter. Despite the advantages of remote interpretation, including enhanced accessibility and cost efficiency, interpreters have reported experiencing anxiety and stress. The COVID-19 epidemic has prompted a shift toward remote interpretation, calling for the development of technological skills. The interpreters also encountered a decline in their social involvement as a result of social distancing measures, however, they were presented with an augmented workload owing to their capacity to smoothly shift from one online session to the next. Nevertheless, a considerable segment of participants anticipated that remote interpretation services would continue to be in great demand even after the pandemic era, whereas a few recognized the significance of face-to-face communication in interpretation. In general, this study illuminates the encounters of interpreters from Kazakhstan amid the pandemic and offers perspectives on the obstacles and possibilities of remote interpretation.

Limitations/Challenges

One of the primary constraints was the limited availability of interpreters. The interview was conducted only with a sample size of 10 interpreters. The researcher commenced conducting interviews in March. The scheduling of interpreters was deemed unsuitable during the spring season due to an increase in their workload, rendering it impractical and unsuitable. Moreover, certain interpreters found the interview's duration of around 30 minutes to be lengthy.

Another limitation arose during the process of data collection. The primary issue that came up during the interview pertained to the manner in which the interpreters responded to interview protocol questions. Several responses provided by the participants were brief and lacked substantive information, thereby necessitating additional questions. Certain individuals provided an excessive amount of information, thereby diverting the focus from the main point.

The study's findings may possess limited generalizability and may not be transferable to other nations or sectors. Another potential limitation of the study is its capacity to present a singular perspective of interpreters' viewpoints, which may evolve over time.

Significance

Although there is the limitations of this research paper, the study successfully achieved its objectives by providing answers to the research questions. The present study underscores the significance of interpreters in contemporary society and posits that optimal working conditions are essential for ensuring the quality of interpretation services. Furthermore, empirical evidence suggests that insufficient knowledge and unpreparedness for obstacles can result in a doubling in workload. Consequently, this research paper can serve as a resource for interpreters to gain knowledge about various global crises and the strategies employed by their counterparts to adapt to them. Moreover, this study can be utilized by institutions such as

organizations, universities, and schools that provide training for prospective interpreters. The findings of the research paper have the potential to enhance the knowledge and understanding of interpreters, translators, and students regarding global crises.

Implications

In order to enhance the preparedness of interpreters in responding to crises of this nature, specific measures are required as a conclusion of the research. The findings of studies conducted in this field have the potential to shape policies and procedures regarding the delivery of interpreting services in times of public health crises. Additionally, these findings may aid in the creation of standards, specialized training programs, and optimal practices for interpreting professionals, as established by interpretation agencies or the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Recommendations for Further Research

There exist multiple suggestions for future research. The study was subject to a limitation in terms of its sample size, which consisted of only 10 interpreters located in Astana. Additional research could expand the participant pool and include interviews with interpreters from other regions or cities. This has the potential to broaden the research's scope. The perception and experiences of interpreters may vary from those of their counterparts in Astana.

Incorporating quantitative research would be advantageous. Quantitative research is a methodology that entails the systematic collection and analysis of numerical data. This methodology is purportedly effective in discerning patterns and means, forecasting outcomes, assessing correlations, and extrapolating findings to encompass fairly large groups.

According to the conclusions of the study, translation companies and event organizers continue to use remote interpretation. And another attractive subject for future research can

be the exploration of online interpretation tools and the mechanisms through which interpretation quality may be improved via platforms. Making a study on specific tools and resources used by interpreters has the ability to help the production of a workshop or training manual that may aid interpreters in the future in efficiently navigating virtual work settings or preparing for unanticipated disasters.

       In summary, although the composition of this research paper presented difficulties, the insights gained throughout the writing process instill confidence that this paper holds potential value for my professional pursuits. Furthermore, the potential usefulness of this paper for other interpreters or readers has contributed to the success of my endeavors. It is my aspiration that this thesis will serve as the inception of my research direction.

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Appendix A: Letter to Participants

Informed Consent

Kazakhstani Interpreters' Perceptions and Experiences of COVID-19 Obstacles in Their Work in the Post-Pandemic Period

Contact Information

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Purpose of Study

You have been asked to participate in a research study. Before you decide to engage in this study, you should understand why the research is being conducted and what it will include. Please take your time reading the following materials. Please, feel free to ask if something is unclear or if you want further information.

The aim of this research paper is to explore Kazakhstani interpreters' perceptions and experiences of COVID-19 obstacles in their work in the post-pandemic period. The research objectives are as follows: observing interpreters' working habits during COVID-19; accessing interpreters' perceptions and experiences during the pandemic period; and identifying changes and facilitators to the interpretation industry through the experience of a Pandemic period interpreters.

Study Procedures

The interview will last 25 to 35 minutes for each participant. The consent form currently consists of 14 open-ended questions. All questions are created to know and study your experience and perception during the COVID-19 and post-pandemic period.

There will be used audio taping. But, if you are not okay with that, I will take only notes during the interview.

Risks

There will be no threats to your mental or physical health or well-being. Any possible concerns, such as noise or disturbances from other individuals. If you are uncomfortable or ill, the interview may be terminated at any moment. You may refuse to answer any or all questions, and you may withdraw your participation at any moment.

Benefits

There are no direct benefits for you, however your participation helps us to obtain data and conclude followings:

1) It prepares us as translators for similar circumstances in the future.
2) The conclusions of the study may provide some recommendations and ways for interpreting site layout (useful resources, technics, psychological factors).

The significance of this study stems from the fact that analogous investigations have never been undertaken in Kazakhstan. The study's study will be beneficial to interpreters, translation studies faculty teachers, and students.

Confidentiality

Your responses and reactions to this interview will be kept confidential. Your responses will not be kept anonymous for the purposes of this research project. The researcher will make every attempt to maintain your confidentiality, including the following:

• Assigning participants code names/numbers that will be used on all study notes and papers

• Storing notes, interview transcriptions, and any other identifiable participant information in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's own possession.

Except in circumstances when the researcher is legally required to disclose particular events, participant data will be kept strictly secret. These occurrences may include, but are not limited to, acts of abuse and suicidal ideation.

Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding this project or suffer any harmful effects as a result of participating in it, please contact the researcher, whose contact information is available on the first page. If you have any questions about your rights as a study participant, or if difficulties emerge that you do not feel comfortable discussing with me, please contact me.

Voluntary Participation

Taking participation in this study is completely voluntary. It is entirely up to you whether or not to participate in this study. If you choose to participate in this study, you will be required to sign a consent form. After signing the consent form, you may withdraw at any moment and without providing a reason. Decision to withdraw from this study will have no effect on your connection with the researcher, if you have one. If you leave the research before the data collection is finished, your data would be brought back to you or deleted.

Consent

I have read and comprehended the material presented, and I have had the chance to ask questions. I realize that my involvement is entirely optional, and that I am totally independent to leave at any time, for any reason, and at no expense. I understand that a copy of this consent form will be provided to me. I willingly consent to participate in this study.

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's signature _____ Date _____

Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

Kazakhstani Interpreters' Perceptions and Experiences of COVID-19 Obstacles in Their

Work in the Post-Pandemic Period

According to the purpose of this study, the major research questions are following:

1. How have Kazakhstani interpreters perceived and navigated the changes in the

   demand for and nature of their interpreting services during and after the pandemic?

Sub-questions of the research are:

1. How do Kazakhstani interpreters perceive the impact of COVID-19 on their work?

2. What are the experiences of Kazakhstani interpreters in adapting to and

   overcoming the obstacles posed by COVID-19 in their work?

3. What are the changes to the interpretation industry based on the experience

   happened under the influence of pandemic from the perception of interpreters?

   Welcome, and thank you for taking the time to participate in this research. My name is

Assylzhan. I am pursuing my Master's Degree at M. Narikbayev KAZGUU University. At the

moment I am writing Master's Thesis on the topic "Kazakhstani Interpreters' Perceptions and

Experiences of COVID-19 Obstacles in Their Work in the Post-Pandemic Period". Hence, I'd

appreciate it if you could share your thoughts and experiences on this subject with me. You've

already signed an informed consent form, so let me give you some background on the study

and its purpose. The aim of this research paper is to explore Kazakhstani interpreters'

perceptions and experiences of COVID-19 obstacles in their work in the post-pandemic

period. The research objectives are as follows: observing interpreters' working habits during

COVID-19; exploring interpreters' perceptions and experiences during the pandemic period;

and identifying changes and facilitators to the interpretation industry through the experience of

a Pandemic period interpreters. All question will be logically continued. So, if you are ready, let's start the interview.

Questions:

1. Can you introduce yourself, your experience in this area? How long have you been working as an interpreter? What languages do you use? What format are you currently working in?

2. Can you explain the duties of interpreters, what do they do?

3. What was the general process of Kazakhstan's transition from offline to online formats? Could you please describe it briefly? How fast did things change during the pandemic?

4. How did you perceive the pandemic, what were your first impressions or concerns? (as interpreters)

5. Did you have any prior experience working as a remote interpreter prior to the worldwide pandemic? Can you describe?

6. Can you describe your experience as an interpreter during the COVID-19 pandemic? And compare it with the previous experience, I mean pre-Covid situation?

7. What were your actions to quickly adapt to the work environment and overcome the dramatic changes? (What translation platforms did they use, did they pay off the platforms of the improved version? How did they improve the Internet? Was it costly?)

8. What challenges have you faced in your work during the pandemic?

9. What can you say regarding interpreter demand and workload during the pandemic? Were there substantial changes for you?

10. Has COVID-19 affected your emotional and mental health? What are some examples of moments when your emotional and mental health improved or weakened? (computer fatigue, coworker interactions, working from home)

11. What are some of the advantages (both professional and personal) of working remotely?

12. What are some of the drawbacks or limitations of working remotely (both professionally and personally)?

13. In your opinion, were there any opportunities that COVID-19 brought to the interpretation industry? If yes, can you explain your idea more broadly?

14. What is your opinion of remote working, do you like working in this mode, would you continue to work this way, or do you prefer the traditional work format?

Appendix C: Interview Transcript Sample

Researcher. Introduction:

So welcome and thank you for taking the time to participate in this research.

My name is Assylzhan and I'm pursuing my Master's Degree at Narikbayev KAZGUU university and I'm writing my Master's Thesis on the topic Kazakhstani interpreters, perceptions and experience of COVID-19 obstacle in their work and in the post pandemic period. So you've already signed an informed consent. So let me give you some background information anyway, the research objectives as follows and 1st is observing interpreters working habits during the COVID-19; Exploring interpreters, perceptions and their experiences during the pandemic period and the identifying identifying changes facilitators to the interpretation industry through the experience of yours. Yeah, all questions I think, will be logically continue. And if you are ready, we can start.

P1: Hello, Assylzhan. Ready and willing. Let's go on.

Q1: So can you introduce yourself and your experience? How long have you been working in this area and the what languages do you use?

P1: My name is D. M. I am a professional conference interpreter including not only simultaneous translation, consecutive interpreting, working in the field for about 10 years now; started at the university as already. Mostly, working in the government bodies.

Q2: So, all together. Can you explain the duties of interpreters, simultaneous interpreters? I mean, yeah. What do they do?

P1: Well, our main objective is to ensure smooth communication, to start interpreting right away in a couple of seconds after the speaker started his own, his own or her own intervention. Our duty, just to ensure smooth communication.

Q3: OK. So moving to the COVID questions, yeah, what was the general process of Kazakhstan's interpreters transition from on offline to online formats in the? Could you please describe it more?

P1: At first it provided a lot of troubles.Technical troubles, mostly, and at the very dawn of the COVID pandemics and lockdowns, the technologies, including zoom, were not fine, just fine, as they are now. And that was the main problem. Secondly, it just decreased the distances just to a nil. And therefore there are also some troubles with time zones. And I think that's it. They're mostly it was very useful.

Q4: So what about? You and how did your perception about the pandemic? What were your first impressions or concerns?

P1: Well, the pandemic is horrible. A lot of people injured, died.In general, but from a professional standpoint, I wouldn't say that as in many other specialties, we had to start having a less job, I think the amount of work, loads of work just increased. There's a lot of more work.

Q5: So before the pandemic, did you have any prior experience working as a remote interpreter.

P1: Yes, but it wasn't that frequent. I think it was like 10 times using different technologies like Skype or just telegram video call or WhatsApp video call and plus there is a very old-fashioned way of interpreting is to interpret via phone. There are three connectors, two people communicating and there is a third line for an interpreter. In government, this practice is very distributed.

Q6: Can you describe your experience during the COVID-19 and somehow compare them?

P1: Before that, the first thing I want to notice is that there are a lot of TRIPS, international trips or within the country. Now the frequency of these business trips decreased. Significantly,

because most of our work is can be conducted at home or in office, not going anywhere. And yes, that's it and the less stress I would say.

Q7: So what were your first actions to quickly adapt to the remote interpreting and the working at home.

P1:Yeah, just instantly downloaded all the possible apps and try to figure out what's going on. And plus there are a lot of pitfalls I'd say in remote interpreting via zoom. First you have to have a good microphone, good pieces of technology, good camera and very stable Internet connection. These are the things of the most concern. In general it is quite simple to handle this technology that are very intuitively clear buttons you have to push. It you have to press and that's it. That additional piece of technology.

Q8: So it's, uh, from the perspectives of yours. Uh, I mean, interpreters. But what about the auditory? Uh, were they ready for this kind of working? And is there any problems with them?

P1: Didn't notice that much problems. The problems are the same. Sometimes people are not used to every kind of technology. Simultaneous interpreting is not very much distributed and not many people are aware about this tactic. And just some people do not know where to press the button to listen to a proper interpreting and that's it and not much.

Q9: So what can you say about the interpreter demand and the workload about you mentioned about this, but can you be more precise about this, about interpreters' demand and their workload?

P1: Demand for interpreting via zoom just increased. As I mentioned, the workload is significantly higher, because employers just do not want to spend money for your trip like airplane tickets, hotel and everything. Plus your enumeration. Now they can just pay. That's just your immigration. That's it. That's they just saving their money. It is very time, not very time consuming. Go on and go ahead and interpret. Just click a couple of buttons. And the

workload just increased. At the expense of the travel time travel, there is no travel time anymore?

Q10: Moving to the next question, has COVID-19 affect that your emotional or mental health? How do you feel that I'm working at home?

P1: I must say that emotionally and psychologically, it was shock. Just listening to news from TV, from those people who you know, of course it is emotionally deranging experience. Moreover, I myself just suffered COVID-19 and it had direct impact on my interpreting skills. Because COVID strikes that your memory capacities and the ability to memorize things very quickly, promptly. It is very damaged now and for a half a year I just couldn't be composed to interpret the especially simultaneously or consecutively.

Q11: So then can you can we just list advantages and the disadvantages? Drawbacks. Yeah, of COVID-19, just to list them.

P1: It provided a huge boost outside with advantage, huge boost for technological development and I noticed that it is not just inventing zooms or skype and everything other kind of pieces of software. I'm also talking about artificial interpreting through AI. Their capacities have significantly increased. Most people started paying attention to understanding each other. There was a huge demand for international communication during the pandemic because people had to figure out how to settle down the problems by lockdowns. And the amount of communication internationally increased and that therefore we had a lot of job and our job is very facilitated with the technology pieces of technology that are appearing being invented during a very short time and I think this momentum is still there and we will have more technologies in future. That will help us understand each other, that's first. Secondly, the workload increased and that means a lot of. This is from the point of view of finances. It is very good because you work a lot you. Get paid a lot. Secondly, less stress because especially

working in the government, you have to go to a special place governmental facility, there's a lot of security protocol issues that are pushing you. And there is no such kind of stress. You just sit at home very comfy zone and interpret everything you want. And plus you can just switch your video off and microphone off to go somewhere drink coffee or anything. I wouldn't say much more disadvantages, except the psychological ones. No, I only see advantages just provided professionally. It just provides a huge boost for the development of the interpreting.

Q12: The last question is about the format of working now. What is your opinion of remote working? Can we leave it or you prefer traditional looking format?

P1: It depends. First, if I am too tired, I wouldn't like to go somewhere abroad especially. I would prefer sit at home and interpret everything and sitting at home, but the best part of being an interpreter is traveling and seeing places and getting to know, especially if you travel to a country of your working language. Traveling means building your network because you see people personally, you can engage with them, see their faces, feel their energy in person and that really helps to promote yourself or being lit up and everything but sitting at home, you know, no one except the organizers and organizers would also know don't know your place.

Q13: So I forgot about one question with adaptation during the commit, do you face any financial problems? I mean here just buying platforms pro zoom platform versions? Yeah, maybe mics or something like that. Camera was it financially visible?

P1: It was visible because it paid back very quickly. I tried to buy the best, finest pieces of technology so that I won't have problems and it cost me around one $1000 max or less and it paid back in a couple of orders, like within a week. And there is. There is no such but you just have to invest once and they will pay back very quickly. No financial problems, vice versa.

You start I started to have more money interpreting because there are a lot of more opportunities.

End: So we've conducted this interview in 15 minutes shorter than we've planned. So thank you for sharing your experience, your knowledge about this it was short but really informative. Thank you.

P1: Thank you. You're welcome.

R: Yeah, good luck.

Appendix D: Coding Sample

Text	Code	Theme
1. Can you explain the duties of interpreters, what do they do?	• to ensure smooth and proper communication (P1, P8) • Start interpreting right away in a couple of seconds after the speaker started (P1)+ • Interpreters work in pairs and provide interpretation into different languages simultaneously (P2, P6)+ • Interpreting involves conveying meaning from the source language to the target language (P3, P5, P7) • It saves time and provides a decent language service (P4) • Interpreters act as bridges between different cultural and language backgrounds (P4) • Preparation involves understanding the context and terminology of the meeting (P6) • Interpreting is a mental process that requires focus and concentration, but personal concerns can be an obstacle and affect the quality of interpretation (P6, P7)	**Interpreters prior to the COVID-19**
2. What was the general process of Kazakhstan's transition from offline to online formats? Could you please describe it briefly? How fast did things change during the pandemic?	• Initial technical troubles with technologies like Zoom (P1, P2) • Main problem was the unreliable technology (P1, P2, P6) • Decrease in distance due to technology made time zones a challenge (P1, P2, P9) • Difficulty finding work at the beginning (P2, P6) • Difficulty separating workspace from home space (P2, P10) • Importance of having backup equipment (P2, P6, P8) • Distractions at home during work (P2, P10)	**Transition period from offline to online format of working**

	- Responsibility for technical aspects of online work falls on the interpreter (P2, P6, P8, P9) - Handing over to the partner was challenging in the beginning (P2, P5, P9) - Interpreters had to find creative ways to communicate with each other during interpretation (by phone. Through social networks) (P2, P6, P8, P9) - The use of a second device and multiple headsets was helpful in certain situations (P2, P4) - Zoom is the main platform used for providing interpretation (all participants) - Translators had to go to each other's homes to provide quality translations (P2) - The COVID-19 pandemic caused a dramatic change in the interpreting market (P3) - Personal and professional boundaries were challenged (P4, P8) - Shows high demand for interpreter profession, especially in the world of remote work (P4, P6) - Many interpreters lost their jobs due to the pandemic, so they started doing written translation (P5) - There was a problem with understanding the delegation of work between organizers and interpreters, such as who is responsible for creating the Zoom link and fixing the settings. (P6) - Feeling stressed and nervous during the first few online interpretation sessions (P6, P9) Demand for online seminars/webinars increased during the pandemic, especially in the education sphere. (P4, P6)	

| 3. How did you perceive the pandemic, what were your first impressions or concerns? (as interpreters) | • Pandemic is horrible with many injuries and deaths (P1)
• From a professional standpoint, job loads have increased instead of decreased (P1)
• There is a lot more work despite the pandemic (P1)
• a period of uncertainty and downtime in the first months of the pandemic when everything was shut down (P3, P4, P8)-Uncertainty prevailed due to the negative impact on work, income, and future prospects (P4, P8)
• Remote work gradually became the norm, with Zoom gaining traction (P3)
• the worst-case scenario is that it's like the 21st century plague (P3)
• Oral interpretation is all about communication and cannot exist without people (P4)
• Excitement turned into frustration and anxiety (P4, P8)
• The recognition of the importance of education and skills development increased (P4, P6)
• The interpreter profession is highly needed and requires flexibility (P4)
• They consider that a career is important, but not as important as human lives and relationships with family (P4, P8, P7)
• Preferable if tired or if no need to travel (P1, P3)
• Traveling allows building network and personal engagement (P1)
• Sitting at home limits personal contact and networking opportunities (P1)
• Real life conversations cannot be replaced by remote work in terms of communication. (P4)
• People working together in the same place are more effective and engaging (P4)
• Traditional ways of communication and work are still important (P4) | **The role of COVID-19 on interpreters' experiences during the pandemic** |

	• Pandemic period provided many opportunities for interpreting work (P5) Online and offline options are both good and should not be mutually exclusive (P1-P6) Personal preference for working in person rather than remotely. (P7) • Difficulty for new freelancers to find clients (P7) • The major problem with online interpretation is the participants' attention span. (P8) • Remote interpretation was good experience for the seek of future (P8)	
4. Did you have any prior experience working as a remote interpreter prior to the worldwide pandemic? Can you describe?	• Remote interpreting was not frequent (10 times) (P1, P4, P8) • Remote interpretation before the pandemic were held by means of phone and Skype (P1, P4, P6, P8) • Phone interpreting is an old-fashioned way of interpreting (P1, P8) • The practice of phone interpreting is widely used in government (P1, P8) • Challenging to work remotely, no one wanted to agree to it (P8) • Less responsibility, only interpreting (P6, P8) – interpreting before the pandemic	**Interpreters prior to the COVID-19**
5. Can you describe your experience as an interpreter during the COVID-19 pandemic? And compare it with the previous experience, I mean pre-Covid situation?	• TRIPS decreased (P1, P8) • Work conducted at home (P1) • Less stress (P1) • Workload significantly higher (P1, P6, P8) • Interpreters without work or no orders at the beginning (P2, P6, P9, P3,) • Lost some offline clients, gained new online clients (P2) • Difficulty interpreting when no reactions from audience (P2, P8) • Important for interpreters to know audience demands (P2) • Improvement in online events as people get used to the platform (P2)	**The role of COVID-19 on interpreters' experiences during the pandemic**

	• Knowing audience before event helps with interpretation (P2) • The audience was not prepared for online interpretation. (P5, P4, P8, P2)	
6. What were your actions to quickly adapt to the work environment and overcome the dramatic changes? (What translation platforms did they use, did they pay off the platforms of the improved version? How did they improve the Internet? Was it costly?)	• To be techonogically sophisticated • Instantly downloaded apps (P1) • Good microphone, technology, camera, and stable internet connection needed (P1, P4) • Intuitive technology to handle (P1) • The market was very flexible and competitive, and the interpreters managed to adopt quickly despite the challenges (P4) • Over time, more platforms appeared and existing ones adapted to new requirements (P5) • there were few platforms for remote interpreting, and they required certification (P5) to look for online platforms to learn new skills related to technology and software programming (P6) • Importance of investing in technical equipment (P1, P2, P5, P7, P9) • Quick return on investment and long-term investments (P1, P5, P4, P8) • No financial problems (P1, P3, P5) • More opportunities for making money (P1, P4, P5) • Long-term and necessary purchases (P4) • Interpreters worked hard to secure a safer future for themselves (P8)	**The role of COVID-19 on interpreters' experiences during the pandemic**
7. What can you say regarding interpreter demand and workload during the pandemic? Were there substantial changes for you?	• Workload significantly higher (P1, P6, P8) • Employers saving money on travel expenses (P1) • Interpreters without work or no orders at the beginning (P2, P6, P9, P3,) • Lost some offline clients, gained new online clients (P2)	**The role of COVID-19 on interpreters' experiences during the pandemic**

8. Has COVID-19 affected your emotional and mental health? What are some examples of moments when your emotional and mental health improved or weakened? (computer fatigue, coworker interactions, working from home)	• Emotionally and psychologically shocking (P1, P3, P4) • COVID-19 directly impacted interpreting skills (P1) • Memory capacities and ability to memorize things damaged (P1) • Emotional challenges during COVID cause of the offline work with high-ranking officials (wearing masks and carrying antiseptics (P2) • The pandemic caused extra concerns and stress due to personal worries and mental distractions about the health of loved ones (P6, P8, P9)	**The role of COVID-19 on interpreters' experiences during the pandemic**
9. What are some of the advantages (both professional and personal) of working remotely?	• People unfamiliar with technology (P1, P2) • Huge boost for technological development and artificial interpreting through AI (P1, P6, P8) – it was good for the development • Increased international communication, opened new market for the interpreters (P1, P2, P5, P6, P7) • Workload and finances improved (P1, P8) • Less stress (P1) • Interpreters gained balance of online and offline work (P2) • Not wasting time to commute, to be prepared for our appearance (P3, P5, P6, P8, P9) • No need to waste energy on making new acquaintances (P3, P5) • You can enlarge your skills both soft skills and hard skills (P3, P4, P5, P6) • Work flexibility, can work from anywhere with good internet connection and equipment (P4, P9) • Comfort of work (P4, P5, P6) • Remote interpreting allowed taking multiple orders and be multitasking (P5, P6, P8, P9)	**Interpreters' perceptions of COVID-19**

	• Money-saving, no extra spends (P5, P6) • the ability to quickly search for information and access the internet (P6)	
10. What are some of the drawbacks or limitations of working remotely (both professionally and personally)?	• Psychological impact, The workload caused the speaker to become more tired and nervous, which affected their mental health, Technical issues would increase the speaker's stress and anxiety (P1, P4, P5, P8) • Technical issues can be a nightmare for interpreters working from home (P2, P3, P4, P5) • It was confusing for participants to select the correct language channel (P2) • Uncomfortable booth conditions at off format during Covid (P2) • Many speakers did not know what kind of headset to use, and multiple people in one room caused sound issues (P3, P4, P5) • There were sound and connectivity issues, pause during interpretation (P3, P4, P5, P8) • There was no relay function (P3) • Some interpreters remained jobless (P4, P5) • The line between personal and working life disappears, leading to feeling overwhelmed and social isolation (P4, P6) - Being alone with only the people you live with was difficult and sometimes people couldn't be themselves • Lack of communication, both related to work and in personal life, feeling loneliness (P4, P5, P6, P8) • Problems with internet connection and electricity in Kazakhstan (P5) • No authentic experience (P5, P8) • Negative impact on health condition (Lack of oxygen, Eyesight and back problems) (P5)	**Interpreters' perceptions of COVID-19**

11. In your opinion, were there any opportunities that COVID-19 brought to the interpretation industry? If yes, can you explain your idea more broadly?	- Zoom improved over time and now allows for easier communication between interpreters (P2, P8) - Zoom has now added channels for more languages (P2, P5) - was happy to see people going back to having meetings in person (P6, P7) - hybrid system of interpretation emerged due to travel restriction (P8, P9)	**The consequences (changes) of the Covid-19 pandemic on the interpreting field**