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Working paper:

Revisiting theories on child language brokering: qualitative analysis of the experiences and perspectives of Occidental College's bilingual students / Reconsiderando teorías sobre *child language brokering*: investigación cualitativa de las experiencias y perspectivas de los estudiantes bilingües de Occidental College

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Abstract: Child language brokering, a form of non-professional translation and interpreting, occurs when a bilingual child carries out interpreting and translation tasks for their family to help them adapt to the communication in the new environment. Since child language brokering occurs in any country hosting migrants, there are a plethora of studies focusing on the most diverse populations. However, the majority of research thus far has centered on U.S. residents of Spanish-speaking origins. In the present study we will analyze said population, although with a new demarcation: our target group are all students at the same college. Through a literature review we identified hypotheses put forward by experts so as to initiate an original qualitative study which will aim to confirm or disprove said ideas. The study, consisting of a preliminary 20-question survey and a subsequent 50-question recorded interview with a sample of 8 participants, will confirm 5 hypotheses and disprove 2. Lastly, we conclude by suggesting new lines of research to delve further into the subject.

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Keywords: Non-professional translation and interpreting; Child language brokering; Immigration; Cultural aspects and mediation

Resumen: En el ámbito de la traducción e interpretación no profesional surge la figura del *child language broker*: un joven bilingüe, descendiente de inmigrantes, que realiza tareas de interpretación y traducción para facilitar la integración de su familia en el país de acogida. Debido a que este es un fenómeno presente en cualquier país receptor de inmigración, existen multitud de estudios enfocados en las más diversas poblaciones. No obstante, aquella que ha recibido el grueso de la atención es la originaria de países hispanohablantes que residen en Estados Unidos. En el presente estudio se analizará dicha población y, además, se delimitará la muestra por un contexto estudiantil análogo: la pertenencia a la misma universidad. Una revisión bibliográfica ha permitido identificar las hipótesis propuestas por expertos, y es nuestra intención confirmar o refutar dichas teorías. Mediante una encuesta preliminar de 20 preguntas y entrevistas grabadas de 50 preguntas a 8 sujetos se han podido confirmar 5 hipótesis y refutar 2. Por último, se concluye sugiriendo nuevas vías de investigación para ahondar más en la cuestión.

Palabras clave: Traducción e interpretación no profesional; *Child language brokering*; Inmigración; Aspectos culturales y mediación.

1. Introduction

Child language brokers (CLB) constitute the term granted by linguistic scholars to young non-professional translators and interpreters who assist their families in navigating communication in a language they do not speak. The objectives of this paper are to study a number of hypotheses held by previous authors and aim to confirm or disprove them in an original qualitative study. By using two different research methods (a survey and personal interviews), we seek to gather enough data to respond to questions related to how interpreting affects these children.

The present study stands out since it focuses on CLB pertaining to the same context: our target group are all students at Occidental College in Los Angeles. Moreover, we have set our sights on handling multiple hypotheses over just one, thus broadening the scope of similar previous studies, maybe to the detriment of more detailed answers from an empirical point of view. The hypotheses we set out to analyze at the beginning of the investigation were the following: "parents requested language brokering even when they spoke English themselves"; "these youngsters were CLB regardless of their level of English"; "CLB see their interpreting exercises as a chore, not interpreting"; "CLB interpret mostly in non-specialized contexts"; "CLB would mostly feel negative sensations when interpreting"; "CLB believe they had to mature earlier than the rest of their peers"; "being CLB strengthened their family and cultural ties"; "CLB feel as if they were in-between two cultures and their own codes"; "CLB felt forced to interpret for their families because there were no interpreters available or because their families trusted them"; "women are more likely to language broker, even if they have older male siblings"; "those professionals from the fields of Translating and Interpreting who get in touch with CLB and their families believe this practice to not be valid"; "those professionals involved in the linguistic exchange believe the users of CLB to be less valid than English speakers"; "the issues CLB had to interpret for were resolved thanks to their help"; "being CLB made them be interested in languages". Regardless of the hypotheses herein

mentioned, the present paper will entirely discard those with inconclusive data to comply with length requirements. In fact, it is worth noting that this study is part of a broader, longer research project, and it is because of these length constraints that we will only focus on the most relevant findings.

2. Literature review

Language brokering (LB) or *intermediación lingüística* per Vargas-Urpí and Romero-Moreno (2023: 3) refers to "interpreting and translating performed by bilinguals in daily situations without any special training" (Tse, 1995: 181). Therefore, it is a widely used method of non-professional translation and interpreting. However, there is an underlying nuance in the term itself:

> Language brokering suggests a certain degree of mediation and negotiation but also transaction. A quick search in the Corpus of Contemporary American English for the word "broker" yields mostly results in business contexts such as finance and real estate like "stockbroker" and "real estate broker." In these usage examples, "broker" appears frequently as a noun or verb synonymous to "dealmaker" or "making deals," implying transaction. The implication of this usage for language brokers suggests that unlike their professional counterparts, language brokers have a transactional agenda that renders them biased in their interactions. (Lian, 2019: 3).

Lian highlights the link between this linguistic concept and the economic term from which it borrows its name: *brokering*. The language broker does not receive monetary compensation from their services, but their involvement is vital to succeed in the communicative process. Equally interesting is the usage of the word *biased* in Lian's quote; experts have discussed from the very inception of the term that language brokers are riddled with bias, which commonly makes them untrustworthy to the eyes of experts and professional interpreters.

Experts agree that language brokers constitute non-professional translators and interpreters (NPTI) and, to varying extents, nuance the content of the messages, whereas this may be so that their family gains something or that the situation does not escalate. Academic researchers McQuillan and Tse (1995) hold that the broker lives a power imbalance situation, given that they are children who interpret for their parents, which adds family hierarchy to the already difficult equation. Therefore, it is not surprising that most of the studies on the matter focus on children up to 16 years old. Nevertheless, there is no reason to believe that these obligations to one's family ever stop, which is why the present study is focused on college-age students.

Many other scholars have stressed that these NPTI bear numerous responsibilities, including decision-taking, socializing agent and link between their families and professionals (Tse, 1995). Having children and young people representing adults in such delicate situations has prompted the demonization of the practice, especially when it comes to medical settings (Faulstich, 2017). However, "very often child language brokers represent the only option in overcoming those language barriers that would otherwise determine unequal access to fundamental services" (Antonini, 2016: 4). Nowadays, most scholars understand that it is normal for allophone people to overcome the language barrier however they can. As Faulstich put it: "translation and interpreting happen in many ways, not always as prescribed by professionals (…) They are doing it, and in new immigrant communities, the practice is normative" (2017: 67).

Researchers have put forward different hypotheses regarding the characteristics of CLB, the contexts in which their assistance is needed the most and their experiences and perceptions. In this study, we will focus on seven of these to try to prove or disprove them through a qualitative study. For the sake of clarity, each of our working hypothesis is explained below along with the results obtained from our study.

3. Methodology and objectives

The purpose of this investigation is to gather a series of testimonies from young adults who carried out their role as CLB to steer a qualitative study on the matter and confirm or disprove hypotheses brought forth by previous scholars. This was achieved through an initial survey and a subsequent personal interview.

Once these were completed, the process of transcribing the recordings and the anonymization of personal details commenced. Afterwards, the results and discussion phase started by studying the responses to the surveys and the contents of the personal interviews.

3.1 Research methods: survey

A survey was chosen as the first research method to assess the suitability of the participants and retrieve basic data. The questionnaire was composed of 20 questions and was sent to the participants through email once they expressed their interest in participating.

The first questions in the survey addressed demographic parameters like age, gender, place of birth and parent's nationality, which were used to verify each participant's aptness for the study. Then, respondents were also inquired on the linguistic level of their parents and possible gender disparity. For a detailed list including all the questions in the survey, see Appendix 1.

3.2. Research methods: personal interview

Once confirmed that the participant was suitable for the investigation, the personal interview was conducted. The interview was conducted through Microsoft Teams calls and was composed of 50 questions. It had a semi-structured nature and was recorded for transcription purposes.

The first questions on the personal interview aimed to evaluate the linguistic level of the CLB and were followed by inquiries on their knowledge of interpreting as a skill. Then, participants were asked about the contexts in which they had brokered in, the feelings carrying out this task provoked and their perception of their own maturity. Later on, we delved into the cultural and family ties related to language brokering, the cultural dilemma it entails and the concept of "obligation". Afterwards, we aimed to find out whether professionals in the fields of Translating and Interpreting or healthcare and legal experts have a classist bias towards language brokering and whether CLB were effective in their tasks. Lastly, we analyzed whether language brokering fostered an interest in languages. For a detailed list including all the questions in the survey, see Appendix 2.

3.3. Participants

The sample of the study is composed of first-generation Occidental College students who served as CLB for their Spanish-speaking immigrant parents.

Occidental College, a private liberal arts college situated in northeast Los Angeles, was chosen for several motives. Firstly, because it is in a virtually bilingual region. According to the last official census published by The United States Census Bureau, 37.7% of the total population in the county of Los Angeles speaks Spanish at home. Moreover, Hispanic population reached 4,804,763 citizens in 2020 (out of 10,014,009), thus, forming the biggest ethnic group of the county (U.S. Census Bureau, s.f.).

Secondly, and maybe most importantly, is that the author of this paper has kept a fruitful relationship with the institution after having conducted a research stay there between 2022 and 2023. During said months, he worked as a Spanish language assistant in four different classes, where he met a handful of students who shared a similar profile: young bilinguals born to immigrant monolinguals with little knowledge of English.

In February 2024, 22 possible participants were contacted, out of which 18 expressed their interest in participating in the study. Therefore, 18 initial surveys and informed consents were sent, however, only 12 met the requirements. Lastly, out of these 12, 8 were interviewed: one man and seven women. This is explained by a lack of availability and time conciliation. Even though our sample is smaller than that of similar studies, we maintain that our qualitative focus on multiple hypotheses compensates for this limitation. In fact, we believe that this study provides value as a starting point to base decisions regarding future lines of research.

4. Results

4.1 Parents requested language brokering even when they spoke English themselves

This hypothesis was proposed by Antonini and Torresi (2022). As Figure 1 shows, 75% of the interviewees explained that Spanish was mostly used in their household. As for ability to communicate in English, 68.75% of the parents were fluent, 6.25% spoke English with limitations and 12.5% did not speak it whatsoever (see Figure 2).

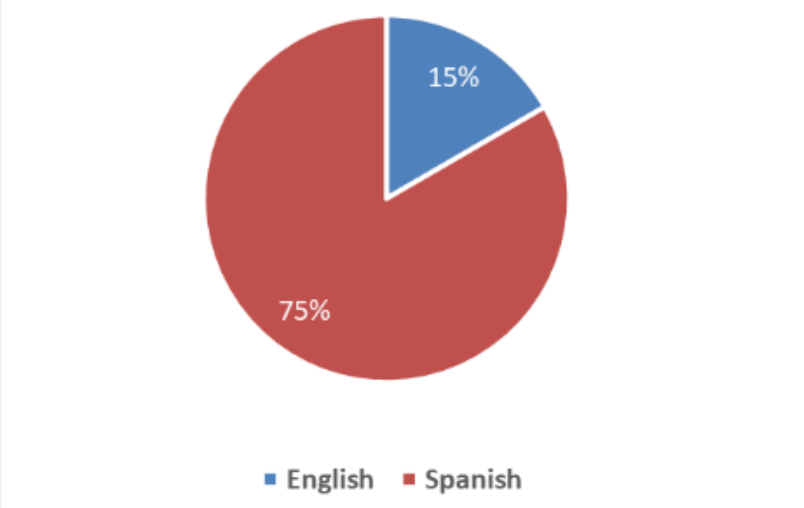

Figure 1: Most spoken language in the household of the participant.

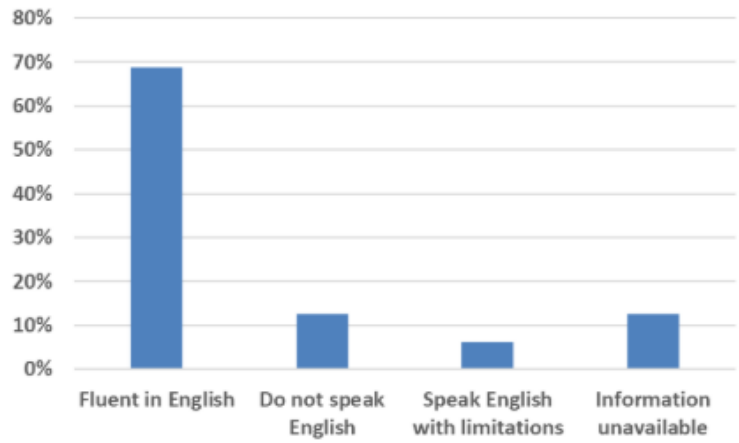

Figure 2. Current linguistic ability of the parents of the interviewed.

Back to the participants, all of them affirmed having been child language brokers. The average age to start was 8.25 years old. Figure 3 shows that the participant whose duties started earliest was 5 years old, while the one who started last was 16. However, these duties have not ended with age, as 75% of the participants express still regularly brokering for their parents.

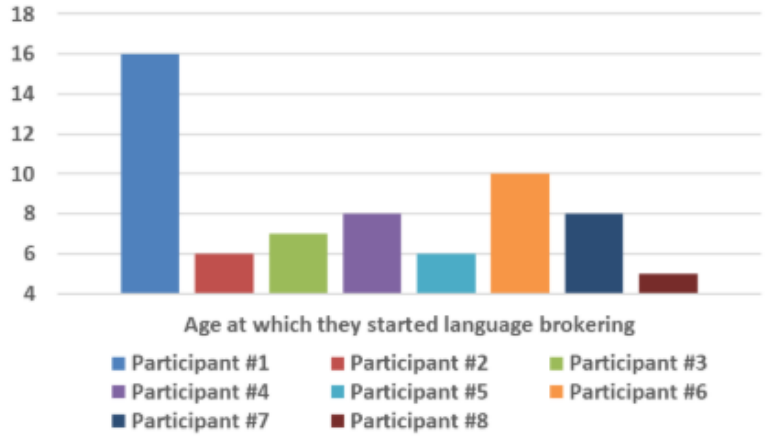

Figure 3. Breakdown of participants according to the age at which they started language brokering.

Based on the evidence gathered, it is possible to confirm our first hypothesis: parents requested their children's help even when they spoke English themselves.

4.2 Child language brokers see their interpreting exercises as a chore, not interpreting

This hypothesis was put forward by Lian (2019) and Vargas-Urpí & Romero-Moreno (2023). 75% of the participants claimed to know what interpreting is, however, none of them gave the right definition; instead, they all thought interpreting was a less-literal translation: "I feel with interpreting you're also taking into context how someone would say it in a fluent sense. Whereas translation would be something like Google Translate where you can take things more literally" (Participant #1).

Participant #1 manifested being an interpreter for their family and having always had the necessary knowledge and tools to do so. It is important to point out, though, that they were the CLB who started out the latest, at 16 years old (see Figure 3). The reasoning behind this is that they did not learn Spanish until high school, having had a completely different experience than the rest of the brokers.

Participant #2 also saw themselves as an interpreter. However, they expressed the following when it came to their abilities:

> I think going back to my memories of interpreting, sometimes it would be very important legal documents. And I feel like for that, when I would read it, I don't even understand what that means in English, so then I'll have to search that up and then try my best to explain it in Spanish.

Participant #3 responded affirmatively too and believed they never encountered any issues given that what their parents requested was always aligned to their life experiences and age.

Participant #4 was an interpreter to their family before but no longer needed to, given that their father had learnt English.

Participant #5 identified as an interpreter and believed that their knowledge and age did not match what she had to work out:

> I remember around 16, my brother had this very severe case of the flu. It was really bad for him because he fainted, and he lost his memory for a bit. My parents took me around 5 in the morning to help them translate, and I remember that the doctor said that he might have meningitis because of inflammation. He had a lot of inflammation in his brain. So there was "we think he has fluid in his spinal cord". And I didn't know how to translate any of that. I was barely processing it in English because I didn't know what was happening, I didn't know what meningitis was, I had to search it up. And then, when I was able to comprehend it in English, I struggled a lot to translate it verbally to my parents in Spanish.

Participant #6 and #7 believed themselves to have been and continue to be interpreters. They pointed out that when it came to legal jargon, they did not have the necessary knowledge. Participant #7 offered the following thought:

> Sometimes I was definitely struggling because there were times where I was having to interpret things that I didn't really understand at the time, like any medical forms or anything about insurance (...) I would have to look it up and I think because it was easy for me to look it up.... I think I had the resources to learn the words, but I didn't always learn- I didn't always know the words but I would try to figure them out.

Participant #8, who continued to be an interpreter for their family, reflected on their life experiences:

> I was an interpreter for my family growing up a lot. I think I would go to a doctor's appointment and when there was no interpreter, my mom would be like, "okay, tell me what they're saying to me". Or, like, to go pay bills, to go to court. I remember my mom would take me out of school and she was like, "okay, you have to go through this errand for me and you have to make sure that you're translating, interpreting right, it has to be done right, because if it's a bit wrong bad things can happen". I was taken to all these

> different places to interpret for my family. You know, my mom, she's a very generous person and sometimes she'd be like, "oh, yeah, I am sending you up to go do this thing with this person who doesn't speak English and you're going to go help them". It just was out of the blue, random, and I didn't mind doing it, because... People need to understand what is being said to them. But it was a big part of my childhood. I joke about it a lot, but I think it was really big. Like it was very, very big.

Due to the fact that 100% of the participants did not know that interpreting was the communicative act whereby a person verbally translates a language for two or more parties, and only identified with the role of interpreter once the interviewer had explained what it entailed, it is safe to say that the CLB saw their role as just another task in their reality as a first-generation citizen and not so much as interpreting.

4.3 Child language brokers interpret mostly in non-specialized contexts

This hypothesis was put forth by Faulstich (2010). As shown in Figure 4, 88% of respondents admitted having acted as CLB in everyday situations and specialized legal contexts. Additionally, 75% also interpreted in medical contexts, which, per Figure 5 was the most repeated context in which they were required. On the other hand, Figure 6 illustrates that 75% of CLB's most frequent interpreting situations belonged to specialized contexts.

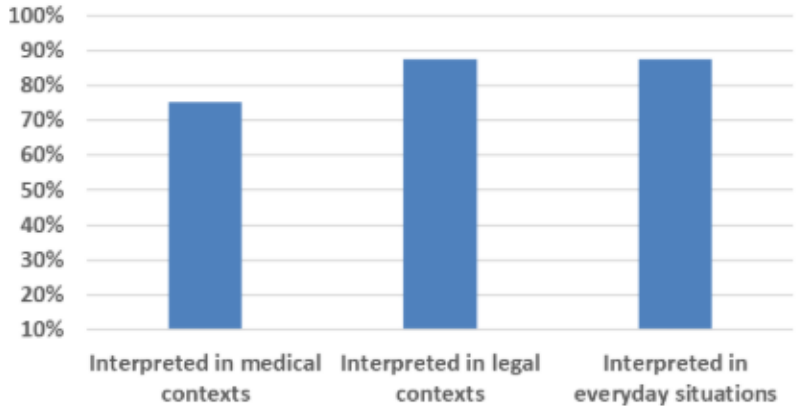

Figure 4. Percentage of participation in different contexts.

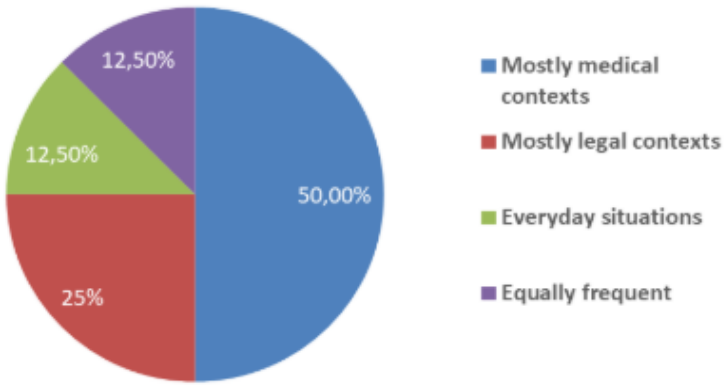

Figure 5. Frequency of participation in different contexts.

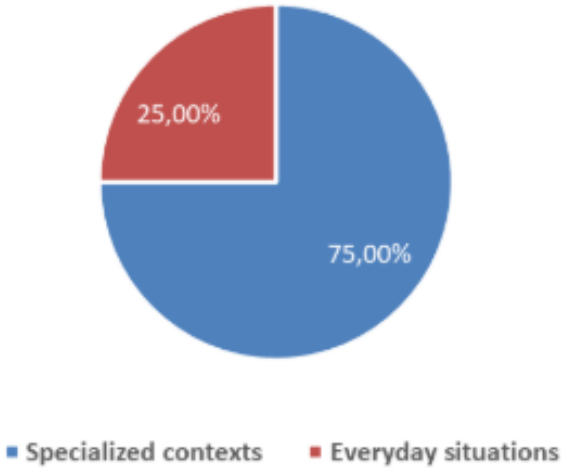

Figure 6. Participants who manifested that the most repeated interpreting situations belonged to specialized contexts.

Participant #1, for example, was mostly needed when it came to legal contexts but not medical, given that their mother did not have medical insurance.

Participant #2 was mostly required as CLB in legal contexts. They did not have to interpret in medical contexts thanks to bilingual doctors in their hometown of New York.

Participant #3 had interpreted for school settings and day-to-day experiences, among others, but their skills were mostly sought in health and legal contexts: "My parents are both undocumented, so they would need help with talking to an attorney".

Participant #6' testimony touched upon concepts such as parentification:

> Since we were low income, there's, like, government assistance, medical assistance, government housing, that kind of stuff. I was always the one that was doing the interpretations of, I don't know... What people would suggest us to do. But in quite honesty, most of the time, I just ended up doing everything. It kind of became like, "you're old enough to just do it yourself". And so, "it's now going to be your responsibility".

Participant #7 mentioned financial and medical contexts as the most common:

> My dad had to go to the hospital because of cancer. And my mom was there and when she was at the hospital, there were interpreters, but when he was back home, she would get calls and stuff, so she would put me on speaker and I'd have to tell her what was going on, so that's the most interpreting I did.

Participant #8 manifested they would translate in medical, legal and everyday contexts:

> I think I had to translate more when it came to medical. Up to a certain age because then we started going to doctors who were bilingual which I think really alleviated me from that burden. (...) Sometimes my mom would take me to meet lawyers. And then sometimes lawyers were like "oh, it's okay. We have an interpreter. You don't need to be here".

Taking all the data into account, it is safe to say that CLB do not interpret mostly in non-specialized contexts, thus disproving Faulstich's theory.

4.4 Child language brokers would mostly feel negative sensations when interpreting

The hypothesis was found in Antonini (2016) and Antonini & Torresi (2021). Even though most adjectives used by the participants were negative (Figure 7), half of the participants manifest having felt mostly positive sensations compared to 37.5% who claim the opposite (Figure 8). Moreover, 62.5% and 75% identify negative feelings of embarrassment and stress, while far bigger percentages identify positive feelings: 87.5% have gained self-confidence and 75% felt proud (Figure 9). Finally, it is quite telling that 75% of participants expressed having overall enjoyed being a CLB (Figure 10). Participant #1, for example, was mostly needed when it came to legal contexts but not medical, given that their mother did not have medical insurance.

Figure 7. Most repeated words when describing language brokering.

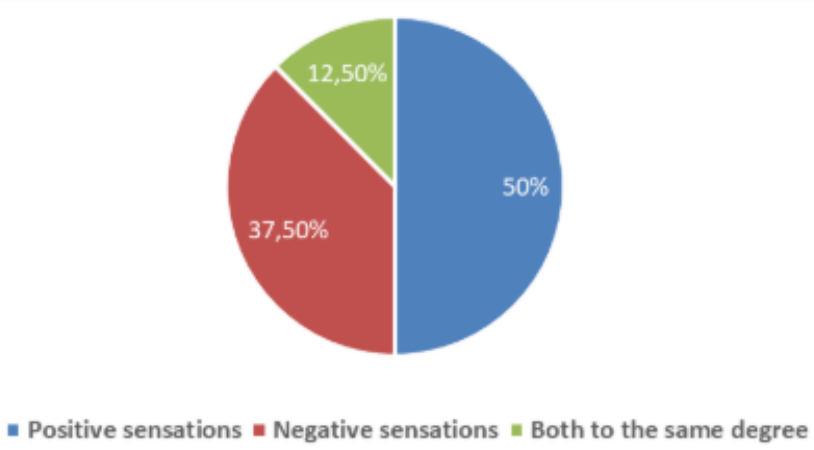

Figure 8. Type of sensations mostly felt.

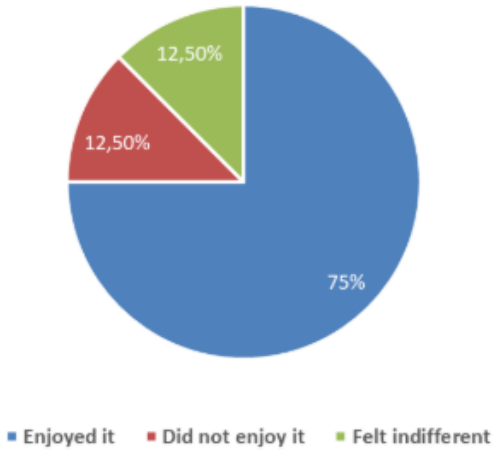

Figure 9. Feelings associated with child language brokering.

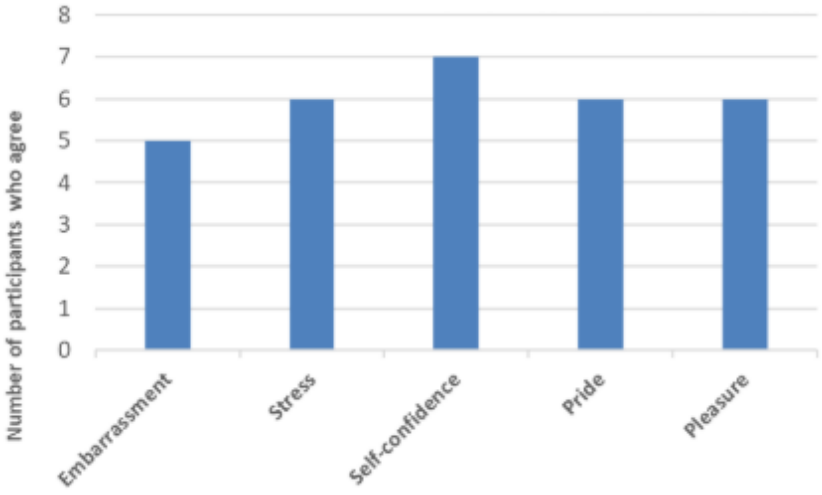

Figure 10. Percentage of participants who overall enjoyed being a CLB

Participant #1 explained that it was not a fun thing to do, but that they overall felt more positive sensations because they were helping their mother. Stress was felt during these times. Finally, they enjoyed translating, for it helped them learn more Spanish.

Participant #2 explained that it was hard and that they felt both negative and positive sensations to the same degree. Again, stress also occurred, but they overall enjoyed being a broker.

Participant #3 felt insecure. Their feelings started off as neutral, evolved into negative for a while but are positive now. They expressed not having felt stress and having enjoyed their tasks.

Participant #4 enjoyed their time being a broker. They felt mostly positive feelings and had fun doing so, but probably only because it did not happen often.

Participant #5 felt burdened by the great responsibility placed on them. They felt mostly negative sensations and responded to our inquiry on enjoying language brokering by saying that it was not a matter of liking or disliking it, it was just another chore.

Participant #6 felt the same way as #5. Their feelings changed from negative to positive over time. All in all, they did not enjoy interpreting.

Participant #7 did not feel any specific way because they thought it was just another way of helping one's parents: "I never felt like it was anything different until I started talking to other people that didn't have to do that. It felt very eye-opening almost, like, 'oh, yeah, I've been doing this forever and others just didn't'". Nevertheless, most sensations were positive, and they enjoyed doing so.

Participant #8 felt that it was something they had to do. They mainly felt positive feelings, such as appreciating the validation from grown-ups. Again, they liked interpreting.

Considering the percentages herein studied, the present hypothesis is entirely disproved.

4.5 Child language brokers believe they had to mature earlier than the rest of their peers

Love & Buriel (2007) put forth this hypothesis. When asked whether they felt that, back in the day, they were mature enough to carry out CLB tasks, most participants indicated that they

did not think they were (Figure 11). In fact, as Figure 12 indicates, 75% of participants claimed to have had to mature faster than their peers who were not requested to language broker.

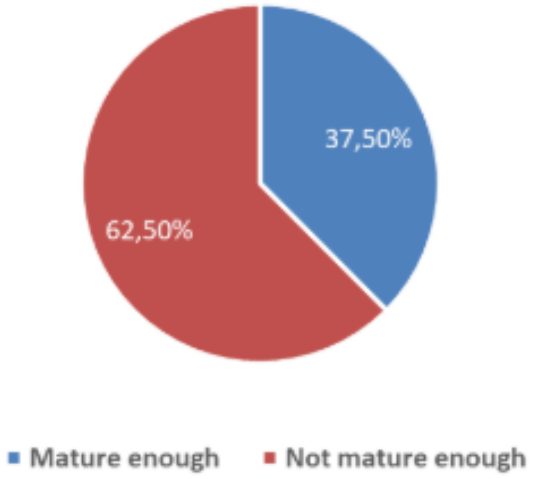

Figure 11. Percentage of participants who claim to have been mature enough to language broker.

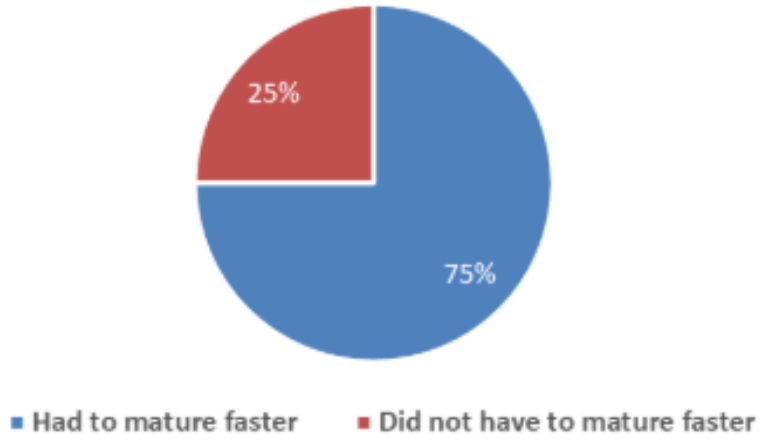

Figure 12. Percentage of participants who claim having had to mature faster than their peers.

This is not the case with Participant #1, however, since they started to interpret later in life (Figure 3) and thus believed they were more prepared to accept that responsibility. As for their parent's dependency, they appreciated their mother depending and relying on them.

Participant #2 did not believe they were mature enough at first and offered a common realization between first generation citizens:

> I feel I've always been very mature for my age. Growing up, I feel like I've always had to be on top of it and also academically. And my academic success and my maturity was definitely tied to making my parents proud. But also tied with translating (...) There's this funny common experience where if you're not able to translate something, your parents are like, "oh, why did I come over here? Or how are you in school and you don't know?".

Participant #3, like #1, was older when they started translating and, thus, believed they were mature enough but at the same time manifest having had to mature faster. They did not appreciate their parents depending on them.

Participant #4 believed it all depended on the type of situation they were asked to interpret in and did not think they had to mature faster.

Participant #5 did not have the level of maturity required and was forced to grow up faster. They brought up feelings of parentification and regret when asked about the dependency of their parents.

Participant #6 matured throughout their language brokering tasks and did so prematurely. As previous participants, they did not enjoy the parentification lived in their family dynamics.

Participant #7 also matured faster but had a positive outlook on their mother's dependency given that she would quickly put everything she learnt to use.

Participant #8 was vocal about not having been mature enough back then and having to do it quickly. They were also upset about their parents' dependency.

The present results seem to indicate that CLB believe to have had to mature faster than the rest of their peers, confirming Love & Buriel's hypothesis.

4.6 Child language brokers feel as if they were in-between two cultures and their own codes

This hypothesis was proposed by Antonini (2010) and Weisskirch *et al*. (2011). In order to assess the validity of this hypothesis, students were asked about two aspects: the culture they identified the most with (their heritage culture or that of the host country) and the perception of others regarding their parent's nationality. The results obtained are included in Figure 13 and 14.

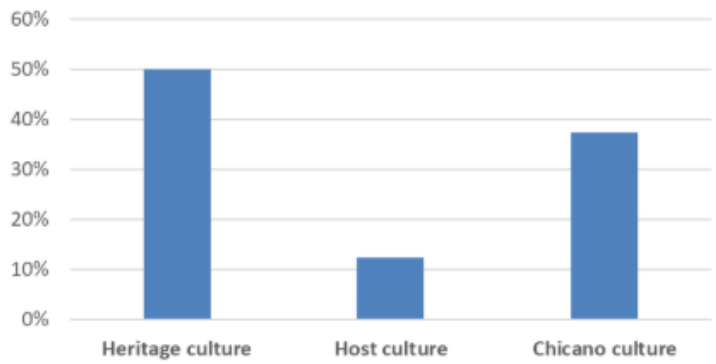

Figure 13. Breakdown of participants and the culture they identify more with.

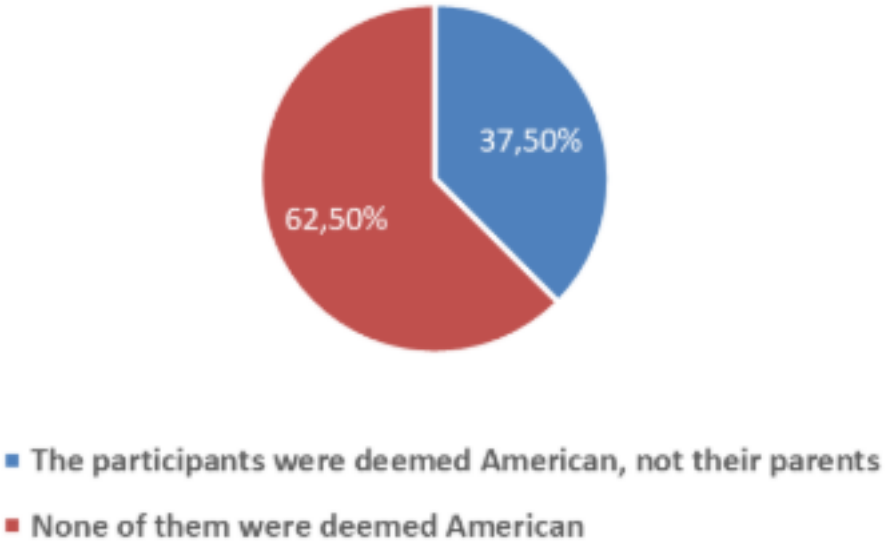

Figure 14. Others' perception on the American nature of the participants and their parents.

Participant #1 identified more with their Peruvian identity. As for feeling pressure to fit in the U.S. they explained that many first-generation citizens share said pressure, which is the reason why they refused to learn Spanish for so long. This participant offered a great reflection on responsibility and independency expectations:

> Even now as a 23-year-old, my mom does not see me as an independent autonomous person. Whereas in America, the second you turn 18 or the second you go off to college, you are seen as independent, and you should start being self-sufficient. Whereas here, my cousin, he's 31 now, and he's still living at home with his parents, and he's still relatively dependent on them, which is completely normal in this country for children to still live with their parents until they marry. And so, my mom carried that same idea into American culture, which has definitely caused a lot of problems for me as an American child. So having a dad who's American, who's given me a lot of independence and freedom and having a mom coming from a culture where you're still seen as a baby, I'm still treated like a like a child, even though I graduated university.

Participant #2 identified more with Mexican culture and agreed with the stance that there was a bigger pressure to fit in the country. When it comes to potential differences between what is expected of an American youngster vs. a young person from their heritage culture, they described that Mexican culture is more centered in community and family while Americans are more set on individualism.

Participant #3 identified with a mix of Mexican and American and also felt a certain pressure to fit in. The difference between Mexican and American youngsters is, to them, that the first are used to working harder and the latter are "lazy and coddled too much".

Participant #4 brought up #3's sentiment: the Chicano reality.

> When I think about Mexican culture, I think about it in a U.S. context. I don't think that I'm not Mexican and not completely American, but because it assumes a level of whiteness that I don't necessarily have- When I think about my culture in a Mexican context, it's Mexican-American.

They also brought up the divide between community vs. individual that other participants have already touched upon.

Participant #5 felt Chicano as well. What is surprising is that they claimed not having felt pressure to assimilate, given that they lived most of their lives in highly segregated areas where they mostly interacted with other immigrants. This, they explained, changed when they moved for college, where they felt out of place. Lastly, they explain that Latino households are stricter than American's.

Participant #6 shared the same identity as the last 3. They manifested having felt great pressure to fit in the U.S. and that there is a gap in mental maturity between their peers and white Americans, the latter being less mature.

Participant #7 identified more with their heritage culture and shared a similar experience to #5's. They believe their culture aims for more meaningful connections with their family and friends.

Participant #8 also identified more with their heritage culture and did not feel pressure to fit in as they lived in mostly Latino communities (like #5 and #7). Again, they brought up feelings of communion and greater good against American's seek for independency.

The data reflecting the large representation of participants who consider themselves Chicanos (Figure 13); the high number of participants who felt pressure to fit in and tried to shed their "otherness"; the large majority who claim they were not perceived as American even though they were legal citizens (Figure 14); and the totality of respondents who express a dissonance between what is expected of them by their families and what is expected of them by the U.S. society, seem to confirm the hypothesis that these young people feel in the middle of two cultures, but do not fully belong to either.

4.7 The issues they had to interpret for were resolved thanks to their help

Antonini (2016) proposed this hypothesis. All participants were able to think of a specific situation or moment in which, thanks to their interpreting, a problem was solved, or something was obtained (as seen in Figure 15). Moreover, 50% of them claimed to never have been in a situation they could not work through with their interpreting skills (Figure 16).

Figure 15. Percentage of participants who were able to think of at least one specific situation where they resolved an issue with their interpreting.

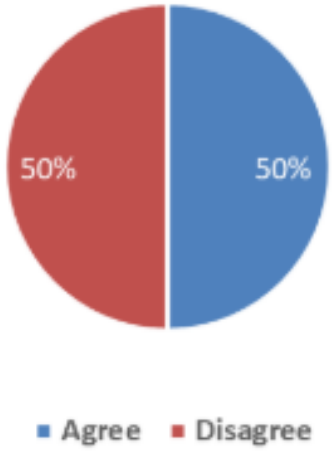

Figure 16. Percentage of participants who claim not having been able to work through a situation with their interpreting at least once.

Participant #1 alluded to instances of legal documents too hard to comprehend as examples of situations where their interpreting skills were not enough to overcome a linguistic barrier.

Participant #2 told a story about how they helped their mother communicate with a civil servant to understand how to proceed in renewing their passports. On the contrary, they manifested never having been in a situation they could not resolve with their interpreting.

Participant #3 had been the go-to interpreter between their parents, their brother suffering from speech impairment and their doctor for years now. They manifested feeling proud of contributing to the progress made. On the other hand, they did not remember being in a situation they could not resolve.

Participant #4 explained that they could not resolve situations where foreign concepts for their age were used (taxes, mortgages…).

Participant #5 remembered how their interpreting helped diagnose their brother's condition. Regardless of this, they manifested having had trouble when interpreting other concepts mostly reserved for adults.

Participant #6 gave an example where, on top of interpreting between their mother and car mechanics, brokered a deal in the price for a reparation. They did not remember any issue they were not able to work through.

Participant #7 replied that when it came to medical contexts, they would have trouble understanding and would quickly request a professional interpreter.

Participant #8, similar to #3 and #5, brought up that they had to participate in the interpreting of their brother's medical check-ups for his eye procedures. Finally, they did not remember not being able to resolve any issue.

These results confirm our last hypothesis: the issues child language brokers were required in were resolved thanks to their aid.

5. Concluding remarks

Out of a total of 14 hypotheses related to child language brokering, the present article has focused on the 7 that were clearly confirmed or disproved through means of a qualitative study consisting of a survey and a recorded interview.

Proceeding with due caution due to the limitations of the study, the present work has made it possible to confirm that the child language brokers served as such, even when their parents spoke English; that they considered the brokering as a chore and not so much as interpreting; that they believe they had to mature earlier than the rest of youngsters; that they felt as if in-between two cultures and their own codes; and that the issues they had to interpret for were resolved thanks to their help, thus, being essential to their families. Having said this, it seems to be disproved that the child language brokers interpret mostly in non-specialized contexts and that their sensations were mostly negative while interpreting.

It is important to further the research in a future study where the sample is expanded; perhaps not focusing so much on belonging to Occidental College but incorporating instead other neighboring universities with similar characteristics in Southern California. However, discarding the requirement of the college affiliation to be a part of the sample may subtract from the originality of the present study and make it similar to the rest of the available literature: previous efforts tend to group child language brokers by geographic area and not so much by student affiliation. In any case, regardless of whether it is decided to apply less restrictive standards in the requirements to be a part of the sample or to maintain the existing ones, and considering the length and effort devoted to the present study, we believe that any new research should be continued in a hypothetical doctoral thesis, with less temporal and length constraints.

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APPENDIX 1

Question number	Question	Category of the hypothesis seeking to be answered	Hypothesis seeking to be answered
1.	How old are you?	None, eliminatory question on their experience with child language brokering	None, its objective is to verify that the participant has served as a child language broker during their childhood or youth
2.	What gender do you identify with?	As above	As above
3.	Where were you born? Was it in the US or abroad?	As above	As above
4.	Where in the US are you from? Where did you grow up?	As above	As above
5.	What country did your parents immigrate from? How old were they when they came to the US?	As above	As above
6.	What type of education did they have when they first arrived? Have they gotten any further education ever since they got here?	Linguistic level of the parents	Parents requested language brokering even when they spoke English themselves
7.	What language is mainly spoken in your house?	As above	As above
8.	Do your parents speak English?	As above	As above
9.	What level of English did they have when they first arrived?	As above	As above
10.	Have they improved?	As above	As above
11.	Have you ever done any translating whatsoever for your parents or family?	None, eliminatory question on their experience with child language brokering	None, its objective is to verify that the participant has served as a child language broker during their childhood or youth
12.	Do you remember how old you were when you started translating for them?	As above	As above
13.	Do you still translate for them? How often?	As above	As above
14.	Has this changed ever since you moved out for college? In what sense?	As above	As above

15.	Do you have any siblings?	Gender disparity	Women are more likely to language broker, even if they have older male siblings
16.	What is the gender of your siblings?	As above	As above
17.	Are you the eldest or the youngest?	As above	As above
18.	Who is the main translator for your parents out of you and your siblings? Has it always been that way?	As above	As above
19.	Why do you think you/that other sibling are/is the one who mostly does the translating at your house?	As above	As above
20.	Do they usually choose the female children over the male children when translation is needed?	As above	As above

APPENDIX 2

Question number	Question	Category of the hypothesis seeking to be answered	Hypothesis seeking to be answered
1.	Do you consider yourself bilingual? Why?	Linguistic level of the child language brokers	These youngsters were child language brokers regardless of their level of English
2.	What would you say your main language is? Do you consider English and Spanish to be at the same level for you?	As above	As above
3.	Has this stance changed throughout your life?	As above	As above
4.	Do you know what interpreting is as opposed to translating?	Interpreting	Child language brokers see their interpreting exercises as a chore, not interpreting
5.	Do you consider yourself to be an interpreter for your family? Why?	As above	As above
6.	Do you consider yourself to have always had the necessary knowledge and tools to interpret?	As above	As above
7.	What contexts have you had to interpret in?	Contexts	Child language brokers interpret mostly in non-specialized contexts
8.	Have you had to translate written-down documents? What kind?	As above	As above
9.	Is there any context where you had to interpret more often than others?	As above	As above
10.	Have you interpreted in medical contexts?	As above	As above
11.	Have you interpreted in legal contexts?	As above	As above
12.	Have you interpreted in public administration contexts?	As above	As above
13.	Have you interpreted in ordinary, day-to-day contexts? What kind?	As above	As above
14.	Is there any context where you preferred to interpret over the others? Why?	As above	As above
15.	How would you feel when you interpreted for your parents?	Feelings when interpreting	Child language brokers would mostly feel negative sensations when interpreting
16.	What words would you use to describe these moments?	As above	As above

17.	Did you feel more positive or negative sensations? Which ones?	As above	As above
18.	Were you embarrassed when interpreting?	As above	As above
19.	Did it cause you stress?	As above	As above
20.	What contexts would produce the most anxiety?	As above	As above
21.	Would you say you gained any confidence out of these tasks?	As above	As above
22.	Did you feel proud that you were helping your parents?	As above	As above
23.	All in all, would you say you liked interpreting for them?	Maturity	Child language brokers believe they had to mature earlier than the rest of their peers
24.	Do you think you were mature enough to carry out these tasks?	As above	As above
25.	Do you think that you had to mature faster than the rest of kids your age who did not have to translate?	As above	As above
26.	What did you feel seeing that your parents depended on you for these communications?	Cultural and family ties	Being language brokers strengthened their family and cultural ties
27.	How has interpreting for them influenced the relationship with your parents? Do you think that it has been positive, negative or that it has not made any difference?	As above	As above
28.	Has serving as an interpreter for your parents brought you closer to your heritage culture? Would you say that this has made you learn more about your heritage culture?	As above	As above
29.	Has serving as an interpreter for your parents helped you learn more of your heritage language?	As above	As above
30.	Culturally speaking, what culture do you identify more with?	Cultural dilemma	Child language brokers feel as if they were in-between two cultures and their own codes
31.	Was there a bigger pressure to fit in the US since your parents do not speak English or do not speak it well?	As above	As above
32.	Would the rest of the people see you and your parents as Americans?	As above	As above

33.	Do you think that having to serve this role for your parents prevented you from assimilating to American culture?	As above	As above
34.	Is there any difference between the level of autonomy and independence presumed for an American youngster compared to a youngster from your heritage culture? In what sense?	As above	As above
35.	When you had to interpret, were you obliged, asked by your parents or did you volunteer yourself? Was it an obligation or you could refuse?	Perception of obligation	Child language brokers felt forced to interpret for their families because there were no interpreters available or because their families trusted them more
36.	Have your parents ever been offered a professional interpreter? Or the personnel just assumed that you would do the interpreting?	As above	As above
37.	In the case that they have ever been offered a professional interpreter, did they accept it? Why?	As above	As above
38.	Who did they trust more: you or a professional interpreter?	As above	As above
39.	Were you more obliged to interpret in some contexts over others? Which ones?	As above	As above
40.	Was there any context in which you would refuse to interpret?	As above	As above
41.	How have your parent's experiences been with professional interpreters?	Classist bias from the professionals of the fields of Translating and Interpreting	Those professionals from the fields of Translating and Interpreting who get in touch with child language brokers and their families believe this practice to not be valid
42.	Have these professional interpreters ever given opinions on the validity or ethical issues involved in children interpreting for their parents?	As above	As above
43.	Have you or your family ever felt judged by professional interpreters? In what sense?	As above	As above
44.	Have you or your family ever felt judged by the personnel involved in the communication? In what sense?	Classist bias from the professionals for whom the interpreting is done	Those professionals involved in the linguistic exchange believe the users of child language brokering to be less valid than English speakers

45.	What was the attitude of the personnel when they realized you would be translating for your parents?	As above	As above
46.	Think of a specific situation in which you interpreted for your parents. Was the issue resolved thanks to your interpreting? How?	Efficacy	The issues they had to interpret for were resolved thanks to their help
47.	Have there been cases in which the issue was not resolved with your help?	As above	As above
48.	When you would make a mistake and immediately realize, did you correct it or let it be? What did you do in those cases?	As above	As above
49.	Are you interested in languages? Has your interest in them changed throughout your life?	Interest on languages	Being language brokers made them be interested in languages
50.	After these experiences, have you considered pursuing a professional career in the fields of translation and interpreting?	As above	As above