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POLISH SWORN TRANSLATORS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE JOB THEY PERFORM – RESULTS OBTAINED FROM A JOB SATISFACTION SURVEY

Abstract. The main aim of this paper is to present the results of a job satisfaction survey conducted on a group of Polish sworn translators (translating from English into Polish and from Polish into English). The first part of this paper discusses the state of the art of sociology of translation as well as providing a definition of job satisfaction. Then, the author of the paper moves on to the presentation of the research procedure: the methodology, the limitations of the study, the results and a discussion about the findings. This study presents evidence suggesting that Polish sworn translators experience a high level of job satisfaction. Nevertheless, due to research limitations, further studies on this topic are recommended before the issue of job satisfaction among sworn translators is more clearly understood.

Keywords: sociology of translation, sworn translators, job satisfaction, job satisfaction survey.

Introduction

The development of Translation Studies could be exemplified by the so-called 'translational turns', or trends, some of which have attained immense popularity among translation scholars, for example, 'sociological turn' as well as 'power turn' (see Snell-Hornby 2006). As Simeoni (2005: 12) stated, in recent years, considerable interest in the social aspects of translation studies has been stimulated. A few theoretical frameworks, in particular those of Bourdieu (Inghilleri 2005), Luhmann (Tyulenev 2012), or Bauman (Piecychna 2017), have been proposed for the analysis of some of the relevant sociological issues within the practice of translation; however, their application has been limited (Chesterman 2006: 9–27). Those aspects of the functioning of translation which are mainly undertaken within the research area relate to themes such as a translator's place in the social structure, a translator's status (Dam & Zethsen 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2016; Katan

2011; Koskinen 2009; Paszkiet 2013; Pym *et al.* 2012; Ruokonen 2013), translation as a sociological phenomenon (e.g. Hanna 2016; Tyulenev 2014) or translation as an activity regulated by social actions (for more see Wolf 2007: 1–25). It has to be stressed, however, that despite the considerable interest obtained by the social reality in which translation functions, too little attention is devoted to such phenomena as, for example, the level of job satisfaction among particular groups of translators or interpreters (Rodriguez-Castro 2015: 31). Although some research has already been carried out on this concept (see Choi 2007; Hubscher-Davidson 2017; Lee 2017; Liu 2013; Rodriguez-Castro 2016; Swartz 2006; Tryuk 2007), and it clearly shows that translators and interpreters are rather satisfied with their job (Dam & Zethsen 2016), no previous study has investigated the level of job satisfaction among sworn translators. It has to be noted, however, that within Polish translational literature there have been a few attempts to present the situation of Polish sworn translators (for more see Kubacki 2012 and the quarterly *Biuletyn TEPIS*). Also, for some time now the Polish Society of Sworn and Specialized Translators has been conducting surveys with the aim of acquiring information about the situation and role of sworn translators in Poland. Thus it is attempted throughout this paper to fill the gap. The main issues addressed in this study are two-fold: a) whether Polish sworn translators, as a group, are satisfied with the job they perform, and b) what areas they are most satisfied/dissatisfied with as far as their job is concerned.

This paper has been divided into six parts. The first section examines the professional situation of sworn translators in Poland, while the second concentrates on job satisfaction as discussed in the literature. The next part focuses on the methodology used for this study. It then goes on to results and their discussion. Finally, the concluding part gives a brief summary and identifies areas for further research within the field of the sociology of translation. It also has to be made clear that the main objective of this paper is to discuss *general* job satisfaction among a selected group of workers, without taking into consideration other factors which, although important, are beyond the scope of this article.

Legal underpinnings of the profession of sworn translators in Poland

The sworn translator profession, as opposed to other types of translation practiced in Poland, is one which is most clearly regulated. General information regarding the nature of the job in Poland has been stipulated

in the Act of 25 November 2004 on the Profession of Sworn Translator (for detailed differences between the profession of sworn translator between European countries see Pym *et al.* 2012) as well as in a few regulations issued by the Minister of Justice, which are all provided on the Ministry website (for more see <https://bip.ms.gov.pl/pl/rejestr-i-ewidencje/tlumacze-przysiegli/>). The Act consists of five chapters, each of which relates to general provisions,¹ obtaining and losing the right to practise the profession of sworn translator, rules for practising the profession, the professional accountability of sworn translators, and amendments to provisions in force respectively. A sworn translator, according to the said Act, is defined as a 'natural person' who is obliged to fulfill a long series of requirements in order to be able to join the profession. Pursuant to Article 2.1., a sworn translator:

- 1) is a Polish citizen or a citizen of a European Union Member State, a European Free Trade Agreement Member State – party to the Agreement on the European Economic Area, or, subject to reciprocity, is a citizen of another state;
- 2) knows the Polish language;
- 3) has full capacity for acts in law;
- 4) has not been punished for an intentional offence, fiscal offence, or for an unintentional offence against the safety of economic dealings;
- 5) is a graduate of higher education Magister's studies in the field of philology or is a graduate of higher education Magister's studies in another field and post-graduate studies in the field of translation and/or interpretation, appropriate for the given language;
- 6) has passed an examination in the field of translation and interpretation from the Polish language into the relevant foreign language and from that foreign language into the Polish language; hereinafter said examination shall be referred to as the "examination for sworn translators" ([http://www.mc-tlumaczenia.pl/files/file/PolishSwornTranslatorAct\(27-1-2005\).pdf](http://www.mc-tlumaczenia.pl/files/file/PolishSwornTranslatorAct(27-1-2005).pdf)).

In Article 2.2. it is further specified that knowledge of the Polish language is to be verified during the examination for sworn translators. Although the above provisions do not provide any details as regards the nature and scope of the command of the Polish and English languages, it may be assumed that they encompass the verification of an in-depth knowledge of the rules of lexis, grammar, stylistics, syntax, orthography and punctuation. As can be found in the translational literature (see, e.g., Lang, 1994; Kaufman, 2002; Paprocka-Piotrowska, 2004; Kubicka & Zieliński 2013), however, an excellent command of the Polish language is not always a hard and fast rule, mostly due to the fact that the majority of sworn translators in Poland are English Philology graduates, which indicates some degree of language

interference and the impact of the English language on the way the translators use Polish grammatical and lexical structures while translating from English into Polish. Despite the abovementioned rigorous criteria and rather demanding examination procedure, the profession might be said to attract genuine interest among both novices and professionals. According to statistical data, which can be found at the Polish Ministry of Justice website (the national registry of sworn translators and interpreters), the number of sworn translators amounts to more than 10,000, while the number of sworn translators of English amounts to nearly 3000, although as Pym *et al.* suggest (2012: 30–31), “... the figure of 10,500 authorised translators seems more than three times the total demand” [for sworn translators/interpreters]. As it seems, more detailed data should be provided as regards, for instance, pass rates or the overall number of candidates taking the exam each year.

As for the examination procedure, there are 11 members of the State Examination Committee “appointed and recalled” by the Ministry of Justice. The members of the Committee should be experts in the field so as to be able to properly assess candidates’ efforts. According to Article 3.1.3. of the Act, the Committee should include: “1) four academic teachers employed by schools of higher education in the field of philology, identified by the minister in charge of higher education; 2) three sworn translators who are members of associations of translators, identified by these organizations; 3) three members identified by the Minister of Justice; 4) one member identified by the minister in charge of labour”. The procedures for the Committee’s work and the amount of remuneration for its members are specified in one of the regulations issued by the Minister of Justice.

Examination for sworn translators consists of two main parts: translation from the Polish language into a foreign language and from the foreign language into the Polish language (lasting four hours), and interpretation from the Polish language into a foreign language and from the foreign language into the Polish language (Article 4.1.). During the first part of the exam, the candidates’ task is to translate two texts from Polish into the foreign language (one of the texts must be a court paper, an official letter, or any legal text). During the second part of the examination, the candidates must perform consecutive interpreting of two texts (including one which is a court paper, an official letter, or any legal text) from Polish into the foreign language as well as a vista interpretation of two texts (including one which is a court paper, an official letter, or any legal text) from the foreign language into the Polish language. The second part of the examination is recorded by means of receiving devices. The candidate must pass both parts in order to be granted the status of a ‘sworn translator’. It should also be

noted that in order to take the second part of the examination (interpreting), the candidate must obtain a positive result in the first part (translation). According to the Regulation of the Minister of Justice of 24 January 2005 on the details as regards the way of examining prospective sworn translators, the candidates cannot make use of any translation aids except for the dictionaries they decide to take with themselves for the examination procedure. The examination fee, the amount of which shall be defined by the Minister of Justice, is to be paid by the candidate. According to the Regulation of the Minister of Justice of 24 January 2005 on the amount of the examination fee to be paid by the candidates for sworn translators, prospective sworn translators must pay PLN800. If the candidate does not pass the exam, they may retake it not earlier than after one year as of the date of the previous examination procedure (Article 4.1.3.). Pursuant to the Article 5.1, in the case of a satisfactory result, the candidate receives the right to work as a sworn translator enabling them to practise the profession.

The Act of 25 November 2004 on the Profession of Sworn Translator also stipulates in chapter three the rules for practising the profession of sworn translator. The main duties within the profession include, but are not limited to, preparing and certifying translations, or certified copies of certain documents, from the Polish language into the foreign language, keeping repertories in which the activities should be noted, as well as respecting the privacy of their clients and confidentiality of the documents being translated and certified (for more see Articles 13–19). The sworn translator usually translates and certifies the following types of documents: birth certificates, marriage certificates, various types of agreements, notarial deeds, etc. More importantly, however, according to Article 15 of the 2004 Act, sworn translators “may not refuse to translate and/or interpret in proceedings conducted under statutory law, upon request of a court, public prosecutor, the Police and public administration authorities, unless there are particularly valid reasons justifying such refusal”.

Remuneration for the work being done has been regulated by the Ministry of Justice, and, according to the Regulation of the Minister of Justice of 24 January 2005, sworn translators for the activities they perform for the institutions enumerated in Article 15 of the Act obtain PLN23 for a standard translation page for a translation from English into Polish and approximately PLN30 for a translation from Polish into English, although the rate depends on the specificity and complexity of the task as well as on the deadline of a given commission. As far as interpreting is concerned, the rate for one hour amounts to the rate established for a standard translation page plus 30% of it. In the case of accelerated proceedings, the rate amounts to

the rate established for a standard translation page plus 100% of it. The rates, according to the information found on the Polish Society of Sworn and Specialized Translators website, are much below European standards. Furthermore, sworn translators who conduct the abovementioned tasks improperly are subject to ‘professional accountability’ and various penalties: “admonition, reprimand, suspension of the right to practise the profession, and deprivation of the right to practise the profession” (for more see Chapter 4 of the Act). Sworn translators are people of public trust and thus assume legal responsibility for the activities performed under the Act on the Profession of Sworn Translator. Taking the demanding requirements imposed on the sworn translator into consideration, the robust conclusion is that this group of professionals is constantly under a great deal of mental strain, which might exert a huge impact on how they feel about what they do for a living.

The registry of Polish sworn translators is provided on the Ministry of Justice website, with information about each translator including, but not limited to, name and surname, citizenship, mailing address, the date of having obtained the license, information about academic degrees, and the languages in which a given translator has the right to practise the profession. Many Polish sworn translators also belong to professional translation associations (e.g. TEPIS – the Polish Society of Sworn and Specialised Translators). On their websites such data as that enumerated above can also be found. It is also worth mentioning that the Polish Society of Sworn and Specialised Translators, with around 900 members in 2015 (for more, see the TEPIS Society website), has also been involved with sworn translators’ status for many years, publishing the quarterly *Biuletyn TEPIS*, in which the most important problems affecting the profession are discussed, as well as organizing specialist conferences, biannual international forums, and workshops with the aim of providing a meeting ground for a wide range of professionals: legal, specialist, and sworn translators, lawyers and representatives of the Polish government. In 2005, the TEPIS Society, in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice, prepared The Sworn Translators’ Code including, *inter alia*, ethical standards and rules for practicing the profession.

Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a common notion within the field of sociology of work. There is a consensus among sociologists that the study of job satisfaction might be traced back to the very beginning of the 20th century

(for more see Frazier 2009: 27 ff.). A large and growing body of literature has investigated the problem (see Hall 1994; Williamson 1996; Spector 1997; Brief 1998; Evans 1998; Grint 2005; Callaway 2007; Frazier 2009; Volti 2011; Guillén, Dahl 2011). Traditionally, it has been argued that job satisfaction means a positive emotional state being the result of the appraisal of one's own job (Locke 1976: 1319). Such a perspective towards the notion puts emphasis on how a particular worker feels about his/her work. Nevertheless, Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) address the problem in a very distinctive manner, concentrating on how one assesses his/her job environment. While a variety of definitions, either explicit or implicit, of the term job satisfaction have been suggested (for more see Jex & Britt 2014: 247–288; Srivastava 2005: 91–132), this paper will use a definition comprising elements of both above-mentioned approaches, namely, affective and evaluative. In this study, then, job satisfaction is seen, after Locke (1976: 1307), as the result of “the perception that one's job fulfills or allows the fulfillment of one's important job values...”. However, at the same time, the element of evaluation cannot be neglected, because it is assumed in this paper that the emotional reaction towards one's own job is directly linked to some abstract beliefs (Weiss & Cropanzano 1996) about the job one performs.

Surveys such as the one conducted by Hackman and Oldham (1975) or Bedeian et al. (1988) managed to identify certain features, or determinants, of the notion, namely, feedback, autonomy, task specificity, skills variety, support, and work-family relationships. These are usually employed in order to identify the level of job satisfaction amongst various groups of workers. In recent years, some studies have been conducted (see Barsade & Gibson 2007) with the aim of identifying emotions influencing the level of job satisfaction. It has been demonstrated that the fulfillment of those needs which are of the utmost importance to a worker implies that one is satisfied with his/her job. Their determination depends on the group of workers one analyses; for the purposes of this study, the following dimensions were chosen: activity, independence, variety, social status, moral values, security, social service, ability utilization, compensation, responsibility, creativity, working conditions and achievement (for details see below). It has to be underlined that, so far, there have been studies that investigate job satisfaction among groups of employees such as teachers (Babula 1984; Perie & Baker 1997), healthcare workers (Rana 2014), manufacturing professionals (Govindan 2013), translators and interpreters (see above) or academics (Bentley et al. 2013), amongst others. No researcher, however, has tackled the issue of job satisfaction among sworn translators from an em-

pirical perspective. Therefore, this study attempts to make a contribution into research on the nature of the job of sworn translators as seen from their perspective.

Methodology

To measure the level of sworn translators' job satisfaction, the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (further, abbreviated as the MSQ) was used. The source of the material is Vocational Psychology Research, University of Minnesota. The questionnaire is available under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License, which allows the tool to be used for research purposes free of charge and without written consent (source: <http://vpr.psych.umn.edu/instruments/msq-minnesota-satisfaction-questionnaire>, retrieved on 1 October 2017). The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire is composed of two forms: long and short; for the purposes of this study the short form was chosen.

It was distributed online to 768 Polish sworn translators (of written texts), dealing with translation of texts within English-Polish and Polish-English language pairs, using Google Form. A total of 73 of them filled in the questionnaire (74% women; 26% men). Their ages ranged between 28–84 years old. As for the selection of the subjects for the study, a list of sworn translators provided on the Polish Ministry of Justice website was chosen. The database is maintained by the Polish Ministry of Justice and is widely available to the general public, including clients and researchers, as it does not contain private data. The author of this paper consulted employees from the Department of Sworn Translation of the Polish Ministry of Justice with regard to the use of the data for the purposes of this study, and obtained permission to contact the sworn translators who have been put on the list (<https://bip.ms.gov.pl/pl/rejestr-i-ewidencje/tlumacze-przysiegli/lista-tlumaczy-przysieglych/>). The task of the respondent was to indicate how satisfied he or she was with a given factor relating to the job of a sworn translator. The participants were presented with an opportunity to choose from five alternatives for each item: Very Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, Neither (dissatisfied or satisfied), Satisfied, Very Satisfied.

As mentioned, the MSQ comprises two forms (Weiss *et al.* 1967: 1–2). For the purposes of this study and given the fact that sworn translators are usually self-employed, a modified version of the short-form MSQ was used (see Appendix). On the basis of the scales provided in *Manual for*

Figure 1. Instructions

The purpose of this questionnaire is to verify how sworn translators feel about their present job, what things they are satisfied with and what things they are not satisfied with.

On the basis of all your answers and those of other sworn translators, we hope to get a better understanding of the aspects that the translators like and dislike about their job.

Below you will find statements about your present job as a sworn translator. Read each statement carefully. Decide how satisfied you feel about the aspect of your job described by the statement.

Keeping the statement in mind:

- if you feel that your job gives you more than you expected, tick “Very Sat.” (Very Satisfied);*
- if you feel your job gives you what you expected, tick “Sat.” (Satisfied);*
- If you cannot decide whether or not the job gives you what you expected, tick “N” (Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied);*
- if you feel that your job gives you less than you expected, tick “Dissat.” (Dissatisfied);*
- if you feel that your job gives you much less than you expected, tick “Very Dissat.” (Very Dissatisfied).*

Remember: Keep the statement in mind when deciding how satisfied you feel about that aspect of your job.

Do this for all statements. Please answer every item. Be frank and honest. Give a true picture of your feelings about your job as a sworn translator.

Source: Manual for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss *et al.* 1967: 31)

the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (ibid, 10–11), the following items were selected:

1. Being able to keep busy all the time (standing for the scale of **activity**).
2. The chance to work alone on the job (standing for the scale of **independence**)
3. The chance to do different things from time to time (standing for **variety**).
4. The chance to be ‘somebody’ in the community (standing for **social status**).
5. Being able to do things that do not go against my conscience (standing for **moral values**).
6. The way my job provides for steady employment (standing for **security**).
7. The chance to do things for other people (standing for **social service**).
8. The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities (standing for **ability utilization**).

9. My pay and the amount of work I do (standing for **compensation**)
10. The freedom to use my own judgment (standing for **responsibility**)
11. The chance to try my own methods of doing the job (standing for **creativity**).
12. The working conditions (**working conditions**).
13. The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job (**achievement**).

All the above items might seem too general and not tailored to sworn translators; however, it should be noticed that the main objective of this paper is to discuss the level of *general* job satisfaction among this group of workers (other factors, such as contacts with courts, police, etc., will be studied and discussed in other papers dedicated to the issue of job satisfaction among Polish sworn translators). As specified in the introduction, there have already been a number of studies discussing job satisfaction among both translators and interpreters. However, the authors of the studies have not focused on particular groups of translators or interpreters, treating job satisfaction as a rather universal issue. Building on this lack of research on the issue of job satisfaction among specific groups of translators, the author has decided that the profession of sworn translators should not be treated on a par with other types of translation and thus it deserves a separate study due to a number of reasons. Firstly, it should be made clear that a sworn translator in Poland, unlike other members belonging to different groups of translators, is a person of public trust, a concept typical of the Polish legal system, which means that sworn translation is always carried out in the public interest. Secondly, as already mentioned, pursuant to Article 2.1 of the Act of 25 November 2004 on the Profession of Sworn Translator, in order to obtain the right to practice the profession, a sworn translator must be a natural person who, among other things, “has full capacity for acts in law”, “has not been punished for an intentional offense, fiscal offense, or for an unintentional offense against the safety of economic dealings” and “has passed an examination in the field of translation and interpretation from the Polish language into the relevant foreign language and from that foreign language into the Polish language”. These factors indicate that the Polish government imposes stringent requirements on sworn translator candidates. Thirdly and finally, if a sworn translator does not adhere to any requirements imposed on them with regard to their duties, this may lead to the following penalties: admonition, reprimand, suspension of the right to practice the profession of sworn translator for a given period of time, to mention just a few (for more see the Act on the Profession of Sworn Translator issued by the Polish Ministry of Justice in 2004). All these factors may

have a huge impact on the way the profession is perceived by Polish sworn translators and thus on the level of job satisfaction among these workers. Therefore, despite the fact that in the already existing studies on job satisfaction among translators and interpreters it has generally been found that the participants are satisfied or even very satisfied with their job, it seems necessary to check whether the same result could apply to sworn translators as well.

Directions for the participants of this study as well as item rating instructions were presented on the first page of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was circulated in English. It should be underlined that the questionnaire was sent to the sworn translators (all of them being Polish native speakers) who deal with English-Polish and Polish-English language pairs in their job. It was expected, then, that their command of the English language was at least at C1 level. Accordingly, it was also expected that the subjects should have no difficulties in understanding the items presented in the questionnaire.

The respondents were advised to answer the questions promptly, without thinking much about them, pursuant to the recommendations given in the *Manual for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire*. It was also attempted to establish a good rapport with the respondents, because it is considered to be an essential factor in such studies (Weiss *et al.* 1967: 3). Whenever respondents wanted to obtain additional information about the study, prompt replies were sent. Response choices were weighted in the following manner, according to the recommendations provided by the authors of the *Manual for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire*:

Table 1

Scoring

Response Choice	Scoring Weight
Very Dissatisfied (VDS)	1
Dissatisfied (DS)	2
Neither (N)	3
Satisfied (S)	4
Very Satisfied (VS)	5

Source: Manual for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (1967: 3)

Finally, raw scores obtained for each MSQ scale were converted to percentage scores. As can be read in the *Manual for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire* (1967: 4), the most meaningful scores for interpret-

ing the MSQ are the percentile scores for each scale, which are obtained from the most appropriate norm group for the individual. Nevertheless, due to the fact that it was not possible to find an appropriate norm group, the decision was made to interpret the MSQ raw scores for the selected scales by ordering them. The ordering (see Table 2) indicates areas of relatively greater, or lower, job satisfaction experienced by the subjects. The scoring procedure was carried out according to the principal recommendations formulated in the manual (see Weiss *et al.* 1967: 7–10). Firstly, item scores (1–5) were given for individual responses to a particular item. Then raw scores were determined for each of the thirteen scales (activity, independence, variety, social status, moral values, security, social service, ability utilization, compensation, responsibility, creativity, working conditions and achievement) and summed up, which made up a general result. For correlation analysis, the Pearson correlation coefficient was employed in order to examine the possible relationship between the following variables: job satisfaction and age, as well as job satisfaction and the number of years' experience.

The use of the MSQ data as the basis for indicating given occupational factors is based on the assumption that “if many individually different people are uniformly satisfied or dissatisfied with specific aspects of the same occupation, effective reinforcers for these aspects are available or lacking in the work environment” (Weiss *et al.* 1967: 5).

Results

As mentioned, to assess the level of job satisfaction among the group of Polish sworn translators, a modified version of the MSQ was used. Thirteen items on the questionnaire measured the extent to which the subjects were satisfied with a given area of their job. Raw scores were then changed into percentage scores. The results obtained are shown in Figures 1–13 presented in Appendix 2. In this part of the paper they will be presented according to the following criteria: 1) areas within which the majority of participants are very satisfied and satisfied; 2) areas within which the majority of participants are neither satisfied nor satisfied; 3) areas within which the majority of participants are not satisfied.

It is apparent from the figures presented in Appendix 2 that a large majority of the participants are either very satisfied or satisfied with almost all items analysed. From the data in Figure 1, it can be seen that nearly half the respondents are satisfied with the scale of activity in the

job they perform. It is also apparent from Figures 2, 3, 7–11 that a large number of those surveyed felt satisfied or, in a few cases, even very satisfied with the following scales: independence, variety, social service, ability utilization, compensation, responsibility and creativity. Only a small number of respondents (at most 6.8%) indicated their dissatisfaction with these areas of their job.

As for Figures 1, 4, 5 and 6 (activity, social status, moral values and security), a substantive proportion of the respondents (approximately 35–40%) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. If we now turn to the items with which the participants of this study are, to a large extent, dissatisfied, the results revealed that a relatively deep dissatisfaction is experienced within the following areas: compensation and security (approximately 25% of the participants).

Table 2

General Satisfaction Score

Scale	Total Raw Scores for the whole group	Mean
Activity	271 (S)	54.2
Independence	317 (VS)	63.4
Variety	322 (VS)	64.4
Social status	278 (S)	55.6
Moral values	277 (S)	55.4
Security	233 (S)	46.6
Social service	287 (S)	57.4
Ability utilization	325 (VS)	65.0
Compensation	243 (S)	48.6
Responsibility	301 (VS)	60.2
Creativity	302 (VS)	60.4
Working conditions	289 (S)	57.8
Achievement	293 (VS)	58.6

The data can be juxtaposed with the general satisfaction score measured by calculating raw scores for each item. Due to the fact that 73 respondents took part in this study, the maximum raw score which could be obtained for any one item is 365. In Table 2 there is, then, a clear trend of gearing

towards the level of satisfaction (S) or, at least in some cases, considerable satisfaction (VS). Interestingly, immense satisfaction has been revealed within the areas of independence, variety, ability utilization, responsibility, creativity, and achievement. The single most crucial observation to emerge from the data is that the vast majority of those investigated are very satisfied with the chance to perform tasks which make use of the respondents' abilities.

Overall, these results indicate a high level of job satisfaction amongst the group of Polish sworn translators. Together the results also provide important insights into areas which need modifying, for example, by the government.

Discussion

As mentioned in the introduction, job satisfaction is by no means a new topic in sociological and psychological literature. There are many studies (exemplified in the first section of this paper), in particular within the field of the sociology of work, that have noted the importance of job satisfaction as well as its impact on the quality of tasks performed by a given group of workers. It was also mentioned in the introduction that in recent years, the sociology of translation has gained much popularity amongst translation scholars. Nevertheless, in reviewing the literature, apart from the surveys conducted by the Polish Society of Sworn and Specialized Translators, no data was found on job satisfaction among sworn translators. Therefore, the present study was designed to determine whether the studied group of translators experience job satisfaction and, if yes, to what extent.

The current study found that the majority of participants are thoroughly satisfied with the job they perform. It is interesting to note that the highest level of job satisfaction was revealed within the following areas: independence, variety, ability utilization, responsibility, creativity and achievement. Not surprisingly, job dissatisfaction was found to have occurred within the scales of security and compensation.

One possible explanation for such considerable job satisfaction may be the age of the participants of this study. (It must be underlined, though, that the value of Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) between job satisfaction level and age is -0.034 , which indicates almost no linear relationship between the two variables. The same applies to the relationship between the level of job satisfaction and the number of years' experience: $r = -0.141$). Out of 73 participants, 54 of them were middle-aged (from 35–60). Some

authors (see Glickman 2001) have speculated that firstly, middle-aged workers have more time to eventually find the job which will satisfy them, and, secondly, such workers are more satisfied with certain aspects of a given job, namely, control over tasks performed or self-efficacy. These are certainly the aspects of the job performed by sworn translators, who are, first and foremost, self-employed or freelancers, thus having much more control over their job than, for example, those employed by someone else. Besides, this also accords with the result of the ability utilization item. (It is worth reiterating that a sworn translator is a person of public trust and thus this status might be connected with the ability utilization item). This study confirmed that the sworn translators who participated in the investigation indicated tremendous satisfaction with their use of translation abilities as well as with the accomplishment they got from the job.

There is, however, another possible explanation for the result obtained. It is interesting to note that 72.8% of those who participated in this study were women. It therefore seems possible that the result is gender oriented. This finding supports previous research into this area which links job satisfaction to gender (see Agassi 1982), in which it is generally assumed that females experience greater job satisfaction than their male counterparts. Nevertheless, the relationship between gender and job satisfaction needs to be interpreted with caution, particularly because other factors need to be considered, namely, female- and male-dominated working environments.

The observed high job satisfaction among sworn translators could also be attributed to self-employment. It is worth reiterating that the respondents indicated a considerable satisfaction within the feeling of independence, variety, ability utilization, responsibility, creativity and achievement. In some publications (see Clark 2010, OECD 2011), the relatively good correlation between job satisfaction and self-employment has been indicated, in particular in developed countries. Self-employment is also associated with greater independence (which at the same time could be directly linked to working conditions, as self-employed or freelance translators may choose where they work, either at home or in their own companies), creativity (understood as an opportunity to use one's own methods of work), ability utilization and responsibility (Blanchflower *et al.* 2001); the process of autonomous decision-making has been shown to increase job satisfaction (Helliwell and Huang 2009). The notion of self-employment also provides an explanation for the participant's dissatisfaction within the areas of security and compensation, because it is commonly known that many self-employed may experience severe difficulties earning a steady income, which leads to financial challenges and a widespread feeling of insecurity

(Blanchflower & Oswald 1998). It is encouraging to compare this finding with that found by Lee (2017) who discovered that job security is one of the most important factors determining the level of job satisfaction among professional interpreters in South Korea. This conclusion is also in agreement with Paszkiet's (2013) report and Piecychna's (2017) findings which showed Polish literary translators' great dissatisfaction with remuneration and security issues. The notion of compensation in this study might also be explained by the fact that sworn translators in Poland are held responsible for translation errors and infringements in which cases they have to answer before the Commission for Professional Accountability of Sworn Translators at the Ministry of Justice (for more see Kubacki & Gościński 2015).

Nevertheless, at the same time, the results of this study corroborate the findings of Piecychna's (*ibid*) investigation in that they indicate that Polish sworn translators are rather satisfied with their social status. This inconsistency may be due to the fact that the profession of a sworn translator, as opposed to the requirements with which literary translators have to comply at the beginning of their career, is regulated on the basis of the Act on the Profession of Sworn Translator issued by the Ministry of Justice in 2004, and that the title of sworn translators is awarded to those who adhere to demanding requirements and pass a professional examination. Thus it might be concluded that throughout the years sworn translators have earned more trust from given communities than their literary counterparts. It seems possible that these results are also due to the fact that sworn translators are satisfied with their occupation in general but dissatisfied with working conditions in particular. This conclusion is consistent with the results of the surveys conducted by the TEPIS Society, according to which the subjects often complained about not receiving remuneration on time, with payments late by up to several months (for more see <https://www.webankieta.pl/wyniki-badania/218346/ankieta-pt-tepisstatus-doskonalenie-zawodowe-i-problemy-zwiazane-z-wykonywaniem-zawodu-tlumacza-przysieglego.html>), as well as with research conducted on both professional interpreters (see Choi 2007) and translators (see Katan 2009; Liu 2013; Piecychna 2017). Also, in accordance with the present results, previous studies have demonstrated that translators are generally satisfied with schedule flexibility, independence, variety of tasks, activity and ability utilization (see Rodriguez-Castro 2016: 223–225). These are important issues for future research given that there is abundant room for further progress in determining any significant differences in job satisfaction and career satisfaction experienced by various groups of translators and interpreters.

Limitations of the study

Due to practical constraints, this paper cannot provide a comprehensive discussion of job satisfaction among sworn translators in Poland. The reader should also bear in mind that the study is based on a relatively small sample of subjects (the study can be referred to as not statistically significant). Another problem is that while the scales showed adequate psychometric characteristics, the response format which had been used was found to have a 'ceiling effect' on the majority of the scale scores. Thus most responses to any item alternated between 'satisfied' and 'very satisfied' with a small number of 'neither' responses and very few 'dissatisfied' ones. Therefore, in future the rating scale should be changed, according to recommendations that may be found in *Manual for the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire*.

The scope of this study was also limited in terms of the research paradigm. The current investigation has only examined a level of job satisfaction as exemplified in quantitative data. It is, therefore, recommended that further research be undertaken with the aim of assessing job satisfaction among sworn translators on the basis of qualitative data which could be obtained via questionnaires with open-ended questions or via interviews. More information on certain items of the MSQ, as well as on correlations between job satisfaction and other factors, such as gender or education, would help us to establish a greater degree of accuracy on this matter.

Final remarks

The present study was designed to measure the level of job satisfaction among Polish sworn translators. Job satisfaction is by no means a new term. It might be said that it is a primary concern of sociology of work and organizational psychology. The term should also be at the heart of understanding the functioning of translators in today's world, not least in providing information on how translators view their working conditions or whether any far-reaching changes should be effectively implemented, all the more so that the sociology of translation is an increasingly important area in translation studies. The past decade has seen the rapid development of a widely understood translation as well as translation industry. Nevertheless, a major problem is that there are no studies whose aim would be to determine the level of job satisfaction among sworn

translators and interpreters, which might be a huge surprise given the fact that research within the fields of sociology or psychology has consistently shown a significant correlation between job satisfaction and the quality of the outcomes of a given activity undertaken by a group of workers. As mentioned in the introduction, most studies in the sociology of translation have only been carried out within a small number of areas. What is not yet clear, for instance, is the impact of a conscious evaluation of one's own job on the professional development or, conversely, the impact of one's own translation competence on the level of job satisfaction. Likewise, much uncertainty still exists about the relationship between emotional engagement and a translator's self-concept. Furthermore, there have been no controlled studies whose aim would be to compare differences in the perception of a translator's status among various groups of translators and interpreters.

This study presents some evidence suggesting that Polish sworn translators experience a high level of job satisfaction in many areas which have been analysed. Nevertheless, due to the limitations specified above, further studies on this topic are, therefore, recommended before the issue of job satisfaction among sworn translators is more clearly understood. In future investigations, it might be possible to use a greater variety of alternative responses so as to avoid the above-mentioned 'ceiling effect'. More significantly, the sample which has been used is a rather small one, and with such a small sample size, caution must be applied, as the results cannot be generalized to the population. A further study with more focus on other factors which could be correlated with job satisfaction is strongly suggested. Moreover, several questions remain unanswered at present, including: 1) differences in job satisfaction among those undertaking written forms of translation and those interpreting for courts; 2) differences in job satisfaction among sworn translators in given language pairs; 3) differences in job satisfaction among various national group of sworn translators across the globe. It is certainly hoped that answers to these questions will be discovered through further investigations within the field of sociology of translation. Finally, the results of the study indicate that there is a definite need for the Polish government to reflect upon how much sworn translators earn and how much they have to do, in particular those interpreting for courts or police, because these two areas, namely security and compensation, lead to a high level of dissatisfaction among representatives of this profession. It is certainly hoped that concentrated efforts made by the TEPIS Society and the Ministry of Justice will finally lead to the enhancement of sworn translators' status.

Appendix 1

Satisfaction questionnaire²

The purpose of this questionnaire is to verify how certified translators feel about their present job, what things they are satisfied with and what things they are not satisfied with.

On the basis of all your answers and those of other certified translators, we hope to get a better understanding of the aspects that translators like and dislike about their job.

Below you will find statements about your present job as a certified translator.

Read each statement carefully. Decide how satisfied you feel about the aspect of your job described by the statement.

Keeping the statement in mind:

- if you feel that your job gives you more than you expected, tick “Very Sat.” (Very Satisfied);*
- if you feel your job gives you what you expected, tick “Sat.” (Satisfied);*
- if you cannot decide whether or not the job gives you what you expected, tick “N” (Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied);*
- if you feel that your job gives you less than you expected, tick “Dissat.” (Dissatisfied);*
- if you feel that your job gives you much less than you expected, tick “Very Dissat.” (Very Dissatisfied).*

Remember: Keep the statement in mind when deciding how satisfied you feel about that aspect of your job.

Do this for all statements. Please answer every item. Be frank and honest. Give a true picture of your feelings about your job as a certified translator.

Being able to keep busy all the time

- ☐ Very Sat.
- ☐ Sat.
- ☐ N.
- ☐ Dissat.
- ☐ Very Dissat.

The chance to work alone on the job

- ☐ Very Sat.
- ☐ Sat.

- ☐ N.
- ☐ Dissat.
- ☐ Very Dissat.

The chance to do different things from time to time

- ☐ Very Sat.
- ☐ Sat.
- ☐ N.
- ☐ Dissat.
- ☐ Very Dissat.

The chance to be ‘somebody’ in the community

- ☐ Very Sat.
- ☐ Sat.
- ☐ N.
- ☐ Dissat.
- ☐ Very Dissat.

Being able to do things that do not go against my conscience

- ☐ Very Sat.
- ☐ Sat.
- ☐ N.
- ☐ Dissat.
- ☐ Very Dissat.

The way my job provides for steady employment

- ☐ Very Sat.
- ☐ Sat.
- ☐ N.
- ☐ Dissat.
- ☐ Very Dissat.

The chance to do things for other people

- ☐ Very Sat.
- ☐ Sat.
- ☐ N.
- ☐ Dissat.
- ☐ Very Dissat.

The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities

- ☐ Very Sat.
- ☐ Sat.
- ☐ N.

- ☐ Dissat.
- ☐ Very Dissat.

My pay and the amount of work I do

- ☐ Very Sat.
- ☐ Sat.
- ☐ N.
- ☐ Dissat.
- ☐ Very Dissat.

The freedom to use my own judgment

- ☐ Very Sat.
- ☐ Sat.
- ☐ N.
- ☐ Dissat.
- ☐ Very Dissat.

The chance to try my own methods of doing the job

- ☐ Very Sat.
- ☐ Sat.
- ☐ N.
- ☐ Dissat.
- ☐ Very Dissat.

The working conditions

- ☐ Very Sat.
- ☐ Sat.
- ☐ N.
- ☐ Dissat.
- ☐ Very Dissat.

The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job

- ☐ Very Sat.
- ☐ Sat.
- ☐ N.
- ☐ Dissat.
- ☐ Very Dissat.

Check one:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Age

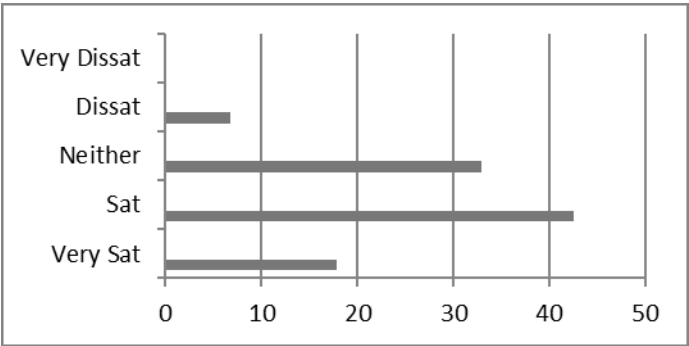
Education

How long have you been working as a certified translator?

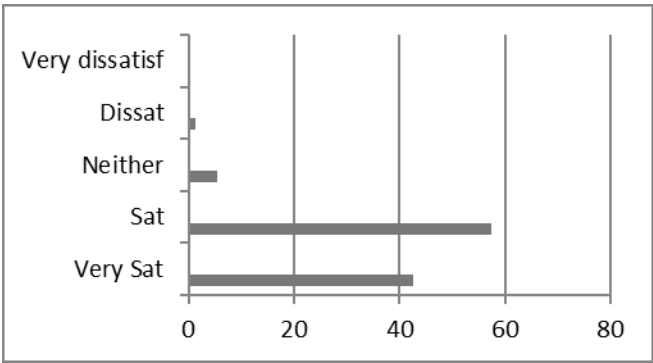
Thank you

Appendix 2

Figures depicting various areas of a sworn translator’s satisfaction with their job

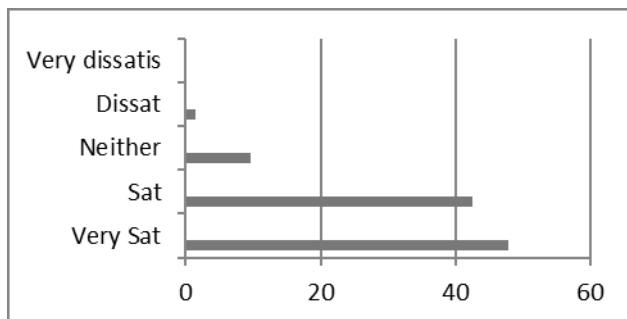


Being able to keep busy all the time

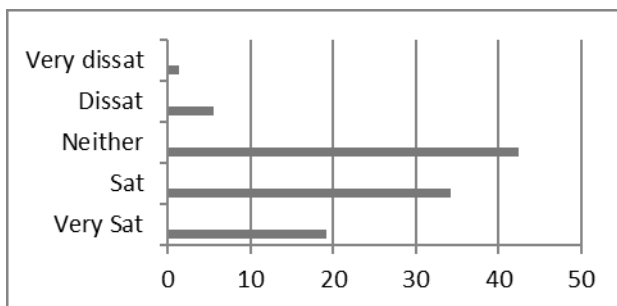


The chance to work alone on the job

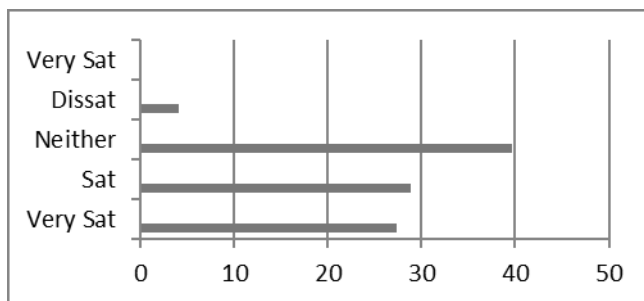
Polish Sworn Translators' Attitudes towards the Job they Perform...



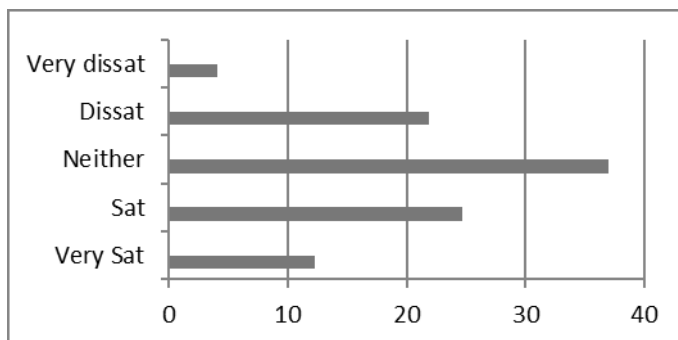
The chance to do different things from time to time



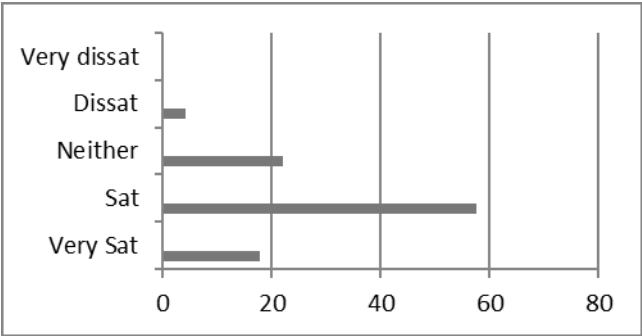
The chance to be 'somebody' in the community



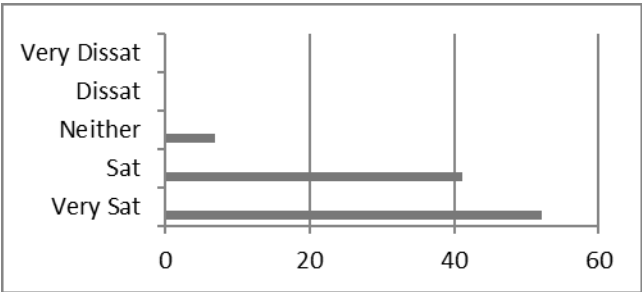
Being able to do things that do not go against my conscience



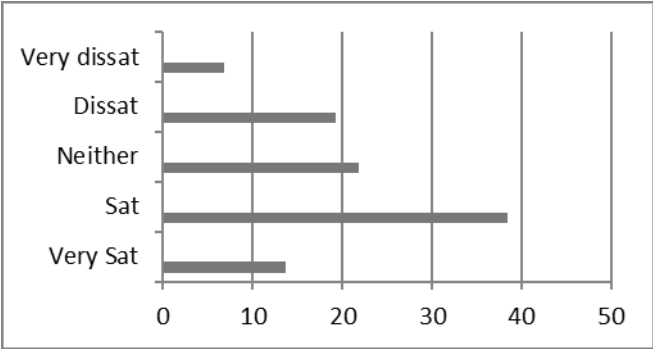
The way my job provides for steady employment



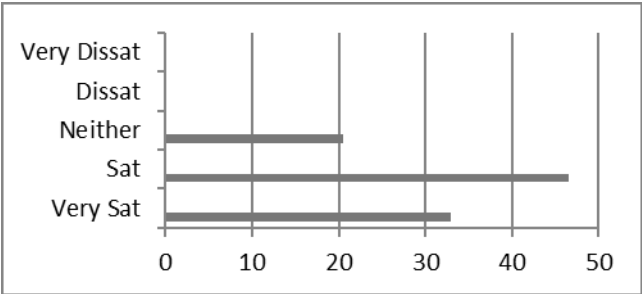
The chance to do things for other people



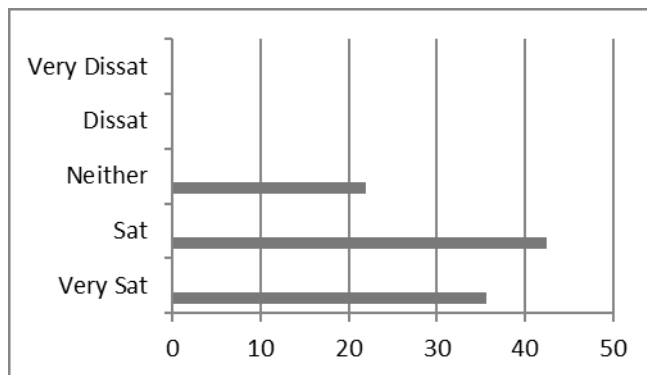
The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities



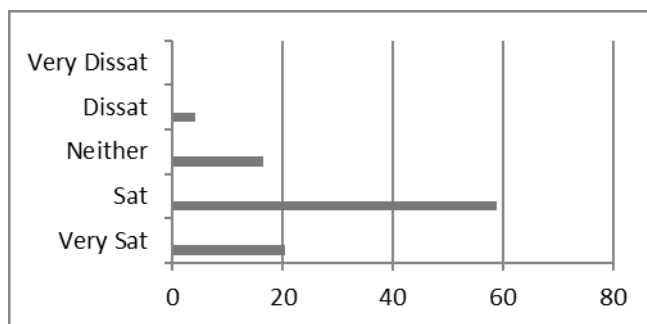
My pay and the amount of work I do



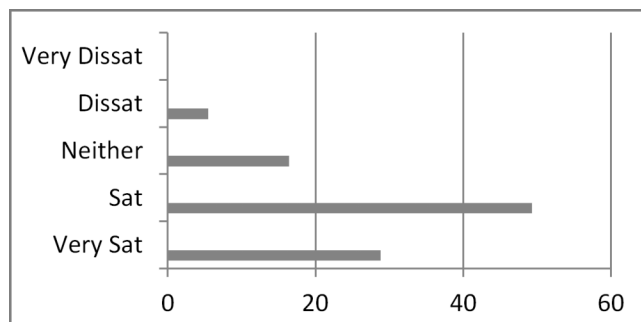
The freedom to use my own judgment



The chance to try my own methods doing the job



The working conditions



The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job

N O T E

¹ Information as contained within the Act are provided in this paper on the basis of the translation by Anna Setkowicz-Ryszka ([http://www.mc-tlumaczenia.pl/files/file/PolishSwornTranslatorAct\(27_1_2005\).pdf](http://www.mc-tlumaczenia.pl/files/file/PolishSwornTranslatorAct(27_1_2005).pdf)).

² The instruction as well as the items are derived from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss *et al.* 1967: 31).

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