



TRAMIG

Local seminar II “Project based learning through immersion”

Thessaloniki, 17.02.2020

The local seminar took place in Thessaloniki on the 17th February 2020; the participants were community interpreters and intercultural mediators, who come mostly from Arabic speaking countries and Iran. Most of them have been working for years with asylum seekers or unaccompanied minors in social, legal and medical settings. Because a lot of them either speak Greek or English, simultaneous interpretation in English and Greek was provided by alumni of the Master Course Conference Interpreting of the Aristotle University, as has been done also in the first local seminar.

The first part was devoted to the presentation of ISO 13611 “Guidelines for Community Interpreting”, the “Code of Ethics and Conduct” of the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT), part of the Code of Ethics of the International Medical Interpreters Association, the Wisconsin Court System and UK’s National Register of Public Service Interpreters.

In the following discussion the participants stressed “impartiality”, “clarity of role boundaries” and “maintaining professional relationships” as the most difficult factors to deal with at their work. Many examples were discussed and even the possibility that one might ask not to be involved in some settings when one knows that members of his/her wider family or his/her region will be present. The most experienced community interpreters offered suggestions on how to set the role boundaries, however they also admitted that it is not easy at all in many cases to do so.

Then a role play was organised with a medical interpreter, a doctor and a female patient. It was based on the teaching material of the workshop in Trieste and enhanced by the participants with their experiences.

The discussion afterwards focused on the necessity of educating the beneficiaries, which is not really possible regarding the refugees, who are however more willing to follow instructions comparing with the different experts, who are involved in the asylum-procedures. The experts, such as doctors, lawyers, police officers etc., are often not familiar with the role of a community interpreter and even get angry when an interpreter asks them to behave accordingly to their function.

The seminar was evaluated as very useful from all participants.