

Public Service Interpreting and Translation (PSIT) as a Social Integration Tool

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ABSTRACT

Interpreting and translation are an essential tool for the social integration of linguistic minorities, especially in public services, where they are a fundamental means of overcoming miscommunication between professionals and users. The purpose of this paper is to provide a case study of PSIT (Public Service Interpreting and Translation) in Spain from a pragmatic perspective in order to gain new information about specific linguistic minorities and to understand the barriers which are causing communication problems.

At the Universidad de Alcalá we have carried out the design, coordination and monitoring of a team of healthcare mediators (PSIT). Our study is based on the hypothesis that mediators are essential for the proper development of intercultural communicative acts in contexts such as those that concern us, translation and interpreting being in most cases the only means of breaking down communication barriers. We analyzed surveys carried out on health professionals and patients in order to specify the type of difficulties encountered in their quest to improve communication between interactants.

KEYWORDS: healthcare, immigration, intercultural and interlinguistic mediation, interpreting, multiculturalism, PSIT