

## **Emotional Challenges of Interpreters Working with Refugees in Türkiye**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This article discusses the emotional distress experienced by the interpreters meeting communication needs of Syrian refugees in Türkiye in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and legal and healthcare settings. The study presented in this paper also examines ethical challenges faced by the interpreters under emotionally difficult conditions and how they overcome this emotional distress. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 29 interpreters working in the aforementioned settings. The interview data were subjected to thematic analysis, and it was found that the majority of the interpreters were sometimes emotionally affected while interpreting traumatic stories. It was also found that interpreters may deviate from the prescribed behavioral standards when interpreting traumatic content even though they seemed aware of the relatively neutral interpreter role expected of them. Moreover, the interpreters experiencing emotional distress during their interpreting assignments were understood to develop their own methods of coping with it due to the lack of guidelines, relevant trainings and support mechanisms.

**KEYWORDS:** emotional distress, neutrality, refugee interpreting, trauma, Turkey