PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERPRETER TRAINEES: THE MYERS-BRIGGS TYPE INDICATOR (MBTI)

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1. Introduction

People have been interested in personality for thousands of years. The Chinese as well as the ancient Greeks, Aristotle and Hippocrates, developed various systems and labels which enabled them to identify and define basic personality traits.

In more recent times, Jung created his own way of looking at personality via "personality types" based on individuals' preferences for functioning in both the personal and professional arenas of everyday life (Jung 1923, 1971). For the past 50 years, the Japanese have been gathering data to support "Theory B", a system used to classify personality based on blood type (Nomi and Besher 1983). Theory B has become so popular in Japan that virtually every stratum of society has been affected by it, from advertising to the development of managerial strategies. Other models include "Spectral Theory", which uses the seven colors of the spectrum as a basis for identifying personality characteristics, and VALS (Value and Life Styles), created in the 1970s by the California-based SRI International. VALS has become very popular in the business world (Oldenburg 1988). The 'communication value orientation model' was developed by Casse (1981). Praendex Incorporated has produced a "Performance Requirement Options" (PRO) worksheet which asks respondents to indicate what they believe are important "behavioral requirements" for any given job (PRO 1989). A list of 90 possibilities is offered. These include items such as "maintaining complete, accurate records", "making major decisions independently", and "being a patient, sympathetic listener" (PRO 1989: 1-3). The general idea is that individuals' qualifications and strengths can be matched to the requirements for a particular position. The Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality situates distinctive and restricted traits within an umbrella grouping of five basic categories: Extraversion, Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Openness to Experience and Conscientiousness (Digman 1990; McCrae and John 1992). There is a growing body of literature on the use of the FFM to assess personality traits cross-culturally (see, for example, McCrae and Allik 2002; Hampson 2000; Saucier, Hampson and Goldberg 2000; Williams, Satterwhite and Saiz 1998. Also see Mohan 2000 for general cross-cultural studies of personality, identity, and factors such as anxiety, stress and neuroticism). Saucier, Hampson and Goldberg (2000) consider whether or not the basic dimensions employed to

describe personality are generalizable across a wide variety of cultures and languages. These include Germanic, Slavic, Romance and non-Indo-European tongues. Block, writing about personality and affect, states that the psychology of personality especially looks at how persons "perceive, respond to, and understand their respective worlds as they seek to establish adaptive life modes" (2002: xii).

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), developed in the 1950s by a mother-daughter team and based on Jung's theory of psychological type, plays an influential role in personality evaluation in the United States (Bayne 1995; Keirsey 1998; Myers 1987, 1980, 1962; Myers, McCaulley, Quenk and Hammer 1998; Quenk 2000, 1993; Tieger 1995). The MBTI identifies our preferences for (1) interacting with others, (2) gathering information, (3) making decisions about what we experience, and (4) controlling ourselves and the world around us. There is no one "perfect" or "ideal" personality type. All individuals exhibit certain preferences and "preferences are not a matter of right or wrong; they are a matter of what feels most natural" (Barr and Barr 1989: 3). Levesque (2001) uses the MBTI as a basis for helping people to identify and develop their creative talents.

The MBTI is the assessment tool employed in the current study and is discussed in greater detail in Section IV. In sum, "one of the most natural things in the world is the mind trying to make sense out of the data of everyday life ... It does that by codifying and putting things into categories" (Hogan, cited by Oldenburg 1988: C5).

2. Rationale for the current study

Interpreter trainers have long been involved in the development and refinement of screening devices which attempt to best identify those individuals who have the greatest chance of success in an interpreter training program (Herbert 1952; Keiser 1978, 1964; Kurz 1996; Longley 1968; Moser 1978; Nilski 1967; Pfloeschner 1965; Schweda Nicholson 1986b, Sofr 1976; Szuki 1988). The search for a "perfect" screening examination, i.e., one which would consistently select potentially successful interpreters and weed out those who are unsuitable, goes on. Screening devices can include a variety of components. First and foremost, though, it is critical to ascertain that candidates have a high level of competence in their working languages. Exceptional facility in their "A" language(s) is of paramount importance. An oral interview as well as written tests of synonyms, antonyms and reading comprehension may be employed. Some trainers include additional assessment components like shadowing and sight translation, as well as consecutive and simultaneous interpretation (Schweda Nicholson 1986b). The present study grew out of the author's interest

in adding new elements with the goal of improving the current screening exam. Inasmuch as it has been demonstrated that particular careers tend to attract certain personality types, the author thought it might be useful to gather personality data from interpreter trainees. An assessment device such as the MBTI is not viewed as a replacement for a traditional screening test; rather, it is proposed that such a personality inventory could be one component of a broader exam. As a result, it might provide interpreter trainers with an additional perspective on their potential trainees.

3. Personality and interpretation

A. What makes a good interpreter?

Practicing interpreters and interpreter trainers have wondered and spoken about the "ideal" personality traits for the successful interpreter for many years. Within the field of interpretation, the classic approach to the identification of personality characteristics has been an introspective one. To be more specific, interpreters have often examined their own personalities and attempted to generalize based on their personal assessments. For example, an individual may express the following ideas: "I am a good interpreter. I am outgoing, intellectually curious, good at analysis and synthesis, and have an eye for organization and detail. Therefore, all good interpreters are/should be like me and possess these same qualities." In this connection, if one asks an interpreter what he or she believes to be the perfect temperament and personality for a new trainee, the interpreter will, almost without exception, describe his or her own personality. The requirements of the interpretation task such as speed with accuracy, grace and calm under pressure, intense powers of concentration, the ability to internalize large amounts of unfamiliar material quickly, and analytical talent (just to name a few) have been projected into the arena of personality. Hence, one finds a compendium of numerous characteristics from which to choose. It will be interesting to identify which of these hypothesized traits actually materialize in the personality inventories of those surveyed. While introspective data can be useful for research purposes, its value should be viewed in perspective. Such information may be included as one component of a study in which more objective measures are also employed.

B. Review of the interpretation literature

Before proceeding to a more detailed description of the research method and analysis of the data, it is useful to include a brief review of the interpretation literature regarding personality. What has been written to date is based on both observation and introspection, primarily within the field of conference interpretation. The observation data come from people both within and outside

the profession. In an early article, Paneth (1962) speculates on the procedures for identifying those candidates who have the greatest chance for success in an interpreter training program. She stresses the "qualities of split-mindedness" and "concentration" and suggests that there are certain "right personality traits"; however, Paneth does not elaborate on what these might be (1962: 109). Longley (1968, 1978), Keiser (1978), and Seleskovitch (1978) also emphasize the importance of concentration. Gerver *et al* (1984), Henderson (1980), and Longley (1968) discuss the interpreter's ability to work as a member of a team. In simultaneous interpretation, interpreters work in glass-fronted enclosures with a partner, generally two colleagues per booth. Longley goes on to state: "Some of us have sometimes wondered if it is the need to work constantly and faithfully in a team that has made so many interpreters impossible individualists outside the cabin" (1968: 52). In fact, interpreters are sometimes characterized as "arrogant" (Henderson 1980: 222).

Interpretation can be a frustrating occupation for some. Those who make it a career as well as those who move on to other professions often discuss the need for interpreters to subjugate their own personality to that of the speaker, as it is the lecturer's thoughts which are being expressed and not the interpreter's. Over the years, many have remarked that interpretation requires one to suppress personal ego and ideas. The interpreter is not the originator of what is said; rather, he/she is the human conduit through which ideas expressed in one language are transferred via/to the structure of another. This is not to say that interpreters do not have personal feelings and/or knowledge about the subjects they interpret; their opinions, however, are not permitted to surface in the context of the interpretation. This "suppression of ego" (constantly expressing another's thoughts and not one's own) may become difficult and frustrating for some interpreters. An article by Henderson (1980) includes the observation that the role of the interpreter is a "subordinate" one (225). Longley (1978: 55) discusses the fact that interpreters provide a service to others and are "constantly under control of an outside will (the speaker)". To wit, they (interpreters) facilitate communication between individuals who, without their assistance, would be unable to establish meaningful verbal contact.

Henderson (1980) conducted a study designed to examine personality characteristics of professional interpreters and translators[1]. He asked these two groups to indicate those personality traits which they (1) ascribe to themselves as well as those they (2) believe best describe their colleagues. More

1 Although Henderson's respondents completed two separate questionnaires, one which covered "biographical data, education, experience, career goals and attitudes" (217), and a second which consisted of the 16 PF Test (Form C 1969 Edition), the 1980 article discussed solely responses to Questions 6 and 7 from the **first** questionnaire. None of the data gathered from the 16 PF Test was included.

specifically, interpreters not only suggested characteristics for their own group but also were asked to describe translators as well. Henderson primarily discusses the answers to two open-ended questions: (1) "In terms of personality, how would you describe a 'typical' translator?" and (2) "Similarly, how would you describe a 'typical' interpreter?" (217). For purposes of this study, the responses to question #2 are of greatest interest. Some respondents offered only one "terse" response while others provided as many as ten or more characteristics. Of particular interest is that "... generally each group's view of the other tended to corroborate that group's own self-image, e.g. the views of interpreters on translators largely confirm those of translators on translators" (218). In this connection, David C. Funder, a psychologist at the University of Illinois at Urbana, is attempting to demonstrate that people's instincts are generally on target when they are asked to evaluate another's personality (Oldenburg 1988).

Much has always been made of the tremendous stress of the job (Longley 1968; Gerver *et al* 1984; Cooper *et al* 1982). In this connection, many agree that it is particularly important for interpreters to be cool under pressure, to have strong self-control, and "nerves of steel" (Henderson 1980, Keiser 1978, Seleskovitch 1978). Related to the stressful nature of the occupation, the interpreter is also expected to be quick-witted and provide interpreted material in a split second (Gerver *et al* 1984, Henderson 1980, Seleskovitch 1978). However, many have observed that interpreters are, as a result, "high-strung", "temperamental", "touchy" and "prima donna" types (Henderson 1980: 222). Under Henderson's category, "Empathy", the interpreter is also characterized as "sensitive" by some respondents (221).

Additional traits which are generally agreed upon include "inquisitiveness" and "curiosity" (Henderson 1980, Keiser 1978, Seleskovitch 1978). Interpreters are thought to prefer variety, to be tolerant, versatile, adaptable, and open-minded. As might be surmised, they are expected to be articulate and have a "knack for communicating" (Seleskovitch 1978: 78). Moreover, proficiency in analyzing and synthesizing material (Keiser 1978, Seleskovitch 1978) as well as attention to detail (Longley 1968) are often discussed. Interpreters are also thought to be self-confident, possessing the ability to take control of difficult situations (Henderson 1980, 1987). In this connection, Seleskovitch writes about the requirement that interpreters exhibit "great self-control" as well (1978: vi).

"Extraversion"[2] is perhaps the characteristic employed most often when talking about interpreters (Carroll 1978; Cattell 1971; Henderson 1980, 1987; Seleskovitch 1978; Szuki 1988). People frequently say that interpreters can be

2 The most frequent dictionary spelling of this word is "extr**o**version." However, Jung wrote it as "extr**a**version", and those who work in the field today have adopted this spelling (Keirsey and Bates 1978).

compared to actors, who enjoy appearing in public and have a flair for public speaking (Henderson 1980; Keiser 1978; Longley 1978). Although rarely mentioned in the literature, discussion has centered recently on the possibility that introverts may actually make better interpreters because they are more focused on the "inner world" (Myers 1987: 5) and are unlikely to be susceptible to internal or external distractions. In fact, one respondent in Henderson's survey characterized an interpreter as "not a good mixer/often a loner" (1980: 221). One can draw a potential connection between the requirement for lengthy concentration and the inner focus of the introvert.

Longley (1968) believes the interpretation profession is not for the "happy-go-lucky" type. She writes: "The need to concentrate for long hours on end, to prepare carefully for meetings, to pay attention to detail, all of which are part of an interpreter's job, do not usually go hand in hand with a bohemian nature" (68). On the other hand, Henderson (1987) does include "happy-go-lucky" in his interpreter profile.

Kurz (1996) employed the 'communication value orientation model' (Casse 1981), which is targeted for use in intercultural communication training. The four major categories are: (1) action-oriented; (2) process-oriented; (3) people-oriented; and (4) idea-oriented. Although Casse believes that everyone possesses all four characteristics to a certain extent, each individual has one orientation that dominates, one whose comfort level is clearly higher than the other three. His instrument consists of first-person statements arranged in forty pairs that deal with personality traits as well as attitudes. Respondents are asked to select the one in each pair that they believe is most reflective of their own personalities. Kurz, however, modified the approach. Instead of asking her sample (which consisted of 31 beginning and 39 advanced students[3] who were taking both translation and interpretation courses) to respond for themselves, she asked students to go through the sentences twice. During one round, they were asked to answer as they thought a translator would and, during the other, as an interpreter would. Kurz's analysis showed that the results were generally in line with the literature cited in her review. Translators were considered to be both "process-" and "people-oriented" whereas interpreters were judged to be "people-" and "action-oriented." Both beginning and advanced students associated "process" more with translators and "people" more with interpreters. Although Kurz's study is an interesting one that uses a personality inventory which differs from the MBTI, the reader is cautioned when interpreting her results. Inasmuch as trainees were not responding with their *own* preferences in mind, the author believes that it is possible that the answers reflected and/or

3 Kurz actually began with a set of 57 questionnaires from the beginners and 42 from the advanced students. However, not all were usable, primarily because a significant number were incomplete.

reinforced existing stereotypes within the fields of translation and interpretation. Kurz herself reflects on this particular limitation in her conclusions (1996).

In sum, although the literature does include some studies as well as much introspective data regarding interpreters' personalities, a detailed and multi-faceted investigation employing the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) (a well-known, standardized personality inventory) has yet to appear. As a result, the current research seeks to fill that void by examining personality characteristics of interpreter trainees using the MBTI.

Figure 1. Four scales of the MBTI

A. Extravert (E)/Introvert (I): gather energy

E	I
--interaction	--inner focus
--talkative	--quiet, shy
--active, outgoing	--prefer to work alone

B. Sensing (S)/Intuitive (N): collect information

S	N
--five senses	--abstract
--live in present	--live in future
--clarity, simplicity	--complexity (“big picture”)
--just right word	--flexible

C. Thinking (T)/Feeling (F): make decisions

T	F
--objective	--subjective
--head	--heart
--like problem-solving	--thrive on harmony

(NOTE: Among T/F types, there is a clear gender distinction in the general population: Women = 2/3 F and 1/3 T.)

D. Judging (J)/Perceiving (P): stance toward external world

J	P
--decisive	-- go with flow”, “play by ear”
--plan/organize	-- pontaneous
--control life	-- nderstand life

(Sources: Keirsey and Bates 1978; Kroeger and Thuesen 1992, 1988; Myers 1987; Silver and Hanson 1980)

4. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is used to examine personality characteristics. This assessment tool has become a standard in business, education, career counseling, and government agencies. It is especially useful in team-building and evaluation of learning styles (Pauley 2002; Scherdin 1994; Sullivan 1994). In addition, research on personalities and careers has demonstrated that certain types of people gravitate toward particular professions because they allow individuals to exercise their favorite ways of doing things (Myers and McCaulley 1985). A description of the four bipolar scales (or "preferences") measured by the MBTI follows along with a hypothetical suggestion regarding the traits of an "ideal" interpreter at the end of each section.

A. The Extraversion (E)/Introversion (I) Scale

The first scale defines one's preferences in gathering energy: Extraversion (E) vs. Introversion (I). Extraverts gain energy from direct interaction with people and things. Talkative and gregarious, they tend to have a wide scope of interests and prefer to live through experiences and talk about them later. Extraverts like to act rather than take a passive role, and they often make decisions spontaneously. Moreover, Extraverts are sociable and tend to like to meet new people. They enjoy seeking out novel experiences. In contrast, Introverts gather energy from within themselves. Quiet and sometimes even shy, they favor depth over breadth and often devote considerable time to thinking things through before acting. Many Introverts are overwhelmed by the outside world and prefer to work alone. Based on the information provided in Section III, one could hypothesize that the "ideal" interpreter would be an Extravert.

B. The Sensing (S)/Intuition (N) Scale

The second dimension of the MBTI, Sensing (S) versus Intuition (N), deals with how people prefer to collect information. Sensing types pay particular attention to their five senses: what they can see, feel, hear, touch, and taste. Living very much in the present, they prefer to take things one step at a time and have a knack for keen observation and an impressive memory for concrete details. Sensing individuals prefer tasks which require them to be careful and extremely thorough. Conversely, they generally dislike activities which demand intuition and imagination. Clarity and simplicity have great appeal for the Sensing type. On the other end of the scale, Intuitive (N) types tend to skip over the sensory data in order to focus on abstract ideas, possibilities, and concepts. They tend to live in the future and enjoy bouncing around various ideas in no fixed order. Intuitive people easily see how things are related; they are most

interested in the "big picture". They are intellectually curious and adaptable to the exploration of numerous relationships and connections among data. They are good at anticipation and prediction inasmuch as they are future-oriented. Moreover, Intuitive types are good guessers. Whereas the Sensing type has a tendency to want to find the "right" word to express an idea, the Intuitive person is flexible and can usually come up with various appropriate word choices easily. Barr and Barr (1989) offer yet another comparison between the Sensor and the Intuitor: "Sensors focus on what someone said. Intuitors focus on what they meant" (3). Complexity is particularly enticing to the Intuitive individual, who probably has a variety of intellectual interests. It appears that the "ideal" interpreter would be an Intuitive type.

C. The Thinking (T)/Feeling (F) Scale

The third bipolar scale of the MBTI focuses on how people prefer to make decisions: Thinking (T) vs. Feeling (F). Before proceeding to a discussion of the Thinking and Feeling types' preferences, it is important to mention that "[t]he T-F dimension is the only pair of preferences which shows a sex trend" (Keirsey and Bates 1978: 20). More specifically, approximately two-thirds of women are Feeling types, while only one-third of women are Thinking types (Kroeger and Thuesen 1988: 20). Conversely, then, the great majority of men are Thinking types as opposed to Feeling ones. The wide disparity between males and females within this particular preference will be discussed in greater detail in Section VI.C.

Thinking types favor an objective, logical approach. Problem solving has great appeal, for it encourages their impersonal analytical skills. Thinking individuals may be perceived by others as cold, even arrogant. They tend to be critical and skeptical. "The Thinker appears to be head-dominated, while the Feeler appears to be heart-dominated" (Barr and Barr 1989: 4). In this connection, Thinkers like to focus on content and ideas rather than the individual who generates the ideas. They dislike redundancy. In contrast, Feeling (F) types take a subjective view and assess personal values, their own and those of others. They focus much more on social relationships and social climate. They thrive on friendship and harmony and are likely to be socially aware and active in humanitarian causes. One can hypothesize that interpreters would be Thinking types.

D. The Judgement (J)/Perception (P) Scale

The last scale deals with control: Judging (J) vs. Perceiving (P). Judging types prefer to control their environment. They are decisive, and constantly move toward closure, toward the completion of tasks. They like to plan and organize; they have a strong sense of duty and prefer to be on time. Making

decisions comes easily and quickly to the Judging type. Conversely, Perceiving (P) types prefer to control their participation in the environment. They like to remain spontaneous, and are always open to new possibilities. Perceptive types are curious and flexible, preferring to "go with the flow" and play things by ear. Once again, based on data referred to earlier, one would surmise that many interpreters would be Judging types, although characteristics of Ps are certainly relevant as well. See Section VI.D. for additional discussion.

To sum up, it is hypothesized that many interpreters will be Extravert (E), Intuitive (N), Thinking (T), and Judging (J) or, in the vernacular of the MBTI, "ENTJ".

However, it must be remembered that most personality tests demonstrate that "... no one is a pure amalgam ... no pure introvert, no pure extrovert, no pure type" (Hogan, cited by Oldenburg 1988: C5).

5. Subjects

A. Groupings

The current study examines the MBTI personality data of several groups of interpreter trainees. First, the group classified as "Regular" (R) (N = 28) is composed of those students who enrolled in and finished a one-year conference interpretation program at either the University of Delaware or the University of Hawaii. The "Vancouver" (V) category (N = 12) includes those trainees who completed a seven-day intensive seminar in primarily simultaneous interpretation at Vancouver Community College. "Government" (G) trainees (N = 19) are those who participated in a five-day intensive course in consecutive interpretation. Unlike most in the "Regular" and "Vancouver" groups, these individuals are currently employed as "Language Specialists" in an agency which utilizes language-skilled individuals for numerous purposes. Those codified as "Not Finish" (NF) (N = 9) are trainees who began the one-year program either at the University of Hawaii or Delaware but, for any number of reasons, did not complete the course of study. The "Hawaii Applicants" (HA) group (N = 56) comprises those individuals who took the Screening Examination (which includes the MBTI) at the University of Hawaii but did not enroll in the program.

In another attempt to garner relevant information from the sample, subjects were also divided by language groups. All trainees had English as a working language, so there is no separate English sample table. However, tables for Spanish, Chinese, and Japanese are included. (See Section VI for detailed discussion of all groupings.)

Of interest is that many in the current sample had no prior interpretation experience whatsoever. Others possess various lengths and types of experience

in language-related fields. Experience or lack of it, however, is not of concern in this study. The fact that these individuals chose to become involved in interpretation and judged it to be a career for which they were suited is of principal interest.

B. Gender

With respect to the subjects' gender, the current primary sample (N = 68) is represented by 51 females and 17 males. In percentages, one finds that a full 75% are women, while only 25% are men. These statistics closely parallel those of Zeller (cited by Kurz 1989) who examined enrollment figures at the Institute of Translation and Interpretation at the University of Vienna during the period 1983-84. During this particular academic year, "84.2% of the students were girls and only 15.8% were boys" (Kurz 1989: 73). In Kurz's 1996 study, she surveyed two different groups: beginning and advanced students. In terms of complete, usable surveys, the beginning students' gender breakdown was 27 females (90%) and 3 males (10%), whereas that of the advanced students was 32 females (84%) and 6 males (16%). The reader notes the striking consistency among all of these groups. In fact, the 1989 statistics re: male/female make-up are virtually identical to those of the advanced students sampled in 1996.

In the author's experience of over 20 years in the interpreter training field, groups of interpretation students are generally overwhelmingly female. Most recently, participants in two, two-week consecutive interpretation courses at the University of Delaware in 2000 and 2001 numbered 10 females and 4 males (2000) and 6 females and 0 males (2001). People who self-select into orientation classes for prospective court interpreters in Delaware are predominantly female as well, usually between 75 and 80%.

The International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) also maintains long-range statistics regarding membership. During the period 1978-84, women constituted a full two-thirds of AIIC's members. Moreover, during the same period, "2.5 times as many women as men joined AIIC" (Kurz 1989: 73). As of June 18, 2003, AIIC membership is at 2667, and 75% are women (www.aiic.net 2003). Zeller's thesis posits a number of sociological and linguistic reasons for the increased presence of women in the interpretation profession, and concludes by saying that men may not be interested in the field because they view it as a "serving" profession (Kurz 1989). Although not a subject of the current study, the reasons for the feminization of the profession are certainly worthy of further investigation.

6. Results and discussion

TABLE 1. Interpreter trainees (R, G, V, NF) N = 68

ISTJ N = 12 % =17.65	ISFJ N = 4 % = 5.88	INFJ N = 2 % = 2.94	INTJ N = 2 % = 2.94
ISTP N = 2 % = 2.94	ISFP N = 1 % = 1.47	INFP N = 4 % = 5.88	INTP N = 6 % = 8.82
ESTP N = 5 % = 7.35	ESFP N = 2 % = 2.94	ENFP N = 5 % = 7.35	ENTP N = 5 % = 7.35
ESTJ N = 6 % = 8.82	ESFJ N = 3 % = 4.41	ENFJ N = 3 % = 4.41	ENTJ N = 6 % = 8.82

I=Introvert, E=Extravert, S=Sensing, N=Intuitive, F=Feeling, T=Thinking, J=Judging, P=Perceiving.

Distribution by the four preferences for TABLE 1:

	N	%
E	35	51.47
I	33	48.53
S	35	51.47
N	33	48.53
T	44	64.71
F	24	35.29
J	38	55.88
P	30	44.12

In order to provide an overview analysis, several groups are joined together in TABLE 1. It represents the type distribution of a primary sample of interpreter trainees (R, V, G and NF categories: N = 68). First, it is important to note that the profession attracts all sixteen types. There is at least one in each category. The greatest number, however, appears in the top left corner: ISTJs constitute approximately eighteen percent of the total. Of interest, however, is that a preponderance of the "Government" group falls into this category. These, as noted, are already language professionals and cannot be considered "typical"

trainees. On the other hand, the fact that they have self-selected into the profession is significant and cannot be overlooked.

The columns underneath TABLE 1 show the distribution across the eight preferences. The sample is about evenly divided between Extraverts and Introverts as well as between Sensors and Intuitors. However, there is a preponderance of Thinkers over Feelers (65% versus 35%). Finally, Judgers outnumbered Perceivers, but only slightly. A detailed discussion of the four scales follows.

A. Extraversion vs. Introversion

The hypothesis that most interpreter trainees and, subsequently, interpreters are outgoing and gregarious Extraverts is not supported. The sample contains about the same number of Extraverts as Introverts. The common impression held by those both within and outside the field is not verified by the current data.

A discussion of working languages may serve to elucidate at least partially the reason for the belief that interpreters are Extraverted. The most common language combination for conference interpreters is English-French-Spanish (Schweda Nicholson 1986a; 1989). Although the United Nations' working languages also include Russian, Arabic, and Chinese in addition to English, French, and Spanish, interpretation from and into Arabic and Chinese is a relatively recent phenomenon in international organizations (Schweda Nicholson 1986a). English, Spanish and French have dominated over the years. An examination of AIIC statistics shows that, of its 2667 current members, 100% have English as a working language while approximately 2300 have French and about 1150 have Spanish[4] (www.aiic.net 2003).

It is, of course, imprudent to make gross generalizations about groups of people and cultures, but many people comment on the friendliness, openness, and charm of Hispanics. Among those who count Spanish as a working language, Extraverts dominate almost two to one over Introverts (total N = 28; E = 18 and I = 10. See TABLE 2.) Moreover, without seeming too simplistic, one can also cite the "*joie de vivre*" mentality of many French speakers. Although the French sample is very small (N = 6), it is worthy of note that approximately 85% are Extraverts (E = 5 and I = 1).

As a result, the data from the current study do support the hypothesis that members of both the Spanish and French groups are highly Extraverted.

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4 The numbers for AIIC's Spanish and French interpreters are approximations. On the website, the statistics are represented with bar graphs, which only have general reference point numbers on the sides. As a result, the author had to make a good faith estimate as to the approximate size of these two groups. An e-mail request sent to the AIIC Secretariat for exact information went unanswered.

TABLE 2. Spanish (SP) trainees N = 28

ISTJ N = 4 % = 14.29	ISFJ N = 0 % = 0.00	INFJ N = 0 % = 0.00	INTJ N = 0 % = 0.00
ISTP N = 0 % = 0.00	ISFP N = 0 % = 0.00	INFP N = 4 % = 14.29	INTP N = 2 % = 7.14
ESTP N = 2 % = 7.14	ESFP N = 2 % = 7.14	ENFP N = 3 % = 10.71	ENTP N = 4 % = 14.29
ESTJ N = 1 % = 3.57	ESFJ N = 2 % = 7.14	ENFJ N = 1 % = 3.57	ENTJ N = 3 % = 10.71

I=Introvert, E=Extravert, S=Sensing, N=Intuitive, F=Feeling, T=Thinking, J=Judging, P=Perceiving.

Distribution by the four preferences for TABLE 2:

	N	%
E	18	64.29
I	10	35.71
S	11	39.29
N	17	60.71
T	16	57.14
F	12	42.86
J	11	39.29
P	17	60.71

The English component is more complicated. Inasmuch as one finds native English-speakers in numerous countries (which are often characterized by widely differing cultural norms), it would be extremely hard to generalize. For example, the following contrast clearly illustrates the point: Americans are known throughout the world for their gregarious, friendly, and easygoing nature. On the other hand, the British (also native English-speakers) generally have a reputation for being more reserved and formal. Unfortunately, it is not possible to compare the English-speakers in the same fashion as the Spanish and French groups because all subjects have English as a working language.

Whether the individuals would be equally as outgoing when speaking either language is another question[5]. Important to this study is the fact that the interpreter trainees control these particular languages and, as a result, also are knowledgeable about and/or members of the cultures in which they are spoken. With all of this said, one could return to the original premise and state with a fair amount of confidence that perhaps the "Extravert" trait among interpreters has been perpetuated over the years simply because there are more Spanish, French, and English interpreters than any others. In other words, people are more likely, just because of sheer numbers, to come into contact with interpreters of these languages.

Also of interest is the fact that Introverts react to stressful situations "primarily by decreasing activity" (Barr and Barr 1989: 42). Inasmuch as stress is a major part of the interpreter's everyday life, it is a bit surprising to find so many Introverts because it is not possible for interpreters to "retreat" when things become difficult; they must persevere under all circumstances/conditions, which are often difficult at best. Kroeger and Thuesen (1992) include a section on stress management in their book. Of particular interest is their characterization of the strategies employed by Introverts to deal with stress:

> [...] because the workplace usually rewards Extraversion over Introversion, there is a tendency for Introverts to 'sell out', giving up their natural preference in favor of living and working on Extraverted terms. So, they act Extraverted during the workday ... Co-workers are shocked to learn that these chatty souls are Introverts in Es' clothing. For the Is it is simply a survival technique, but it can carry a high price in the form of stress and related health issues. Indeed, Introverts tend to be plagued with a range of stress- related illnesses" (234).

Once again, the above analysis (coupled with the previous one regarding language combinations) may serve as a partial explanation for the impression that all interpreters are Extraverted. The 50% in this sample who are Introverts may act Extraverted in the workplace because of the reward attached to the outgoing behavior. As such, the general perception of all interpreters being Extraverted has perhaps been reinforced by the fact that many Introverts behave like Extraverts. This notion is also treated cross-culturally by Allik and McCrae (2002). For example, Asians generally respond like Introverts and are part of collectivistic cultures. However,

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5 A study of Spanish/English coordinate bilinguals suggests, however, that people may exhibit different personalities when speaking different languages (Simon 1987).

> Asians living in close social groups may attribute sociability not to themselves, but to their collectivistic circumstances. They may act like extraverts, but believe it is their duty rather than their disposition (318).

A related point is that Extraverts like to talk with others as a means of sorting out their experiences. On the other hand, Introverts prefer to think quietly by themselves before acting on anything. Analysis is easier for the Introvert than for the Extravert (Myers 1980). The large number of Introverts in the current sample is once again unanticipated, as interpreters earn their living by talking and interacting with others. Although it was predicted that most interpreters would be Extraverts, the data clearly demonstrate that the profession attracts quiet and retiring Introverts as well. Along with additional evidence cited to this point, this result may partially derive from the fact that interpreters dwell in the mind when working.

B. Intuitive vs. Sensing

Secondly, the hypothesis that most interpreters are Intuitive types is not sustained. Rather, the profession attracts both Intuitors and Sensors in about equal numbers. Examining the American population in general, it is interesting to note that approximately 75% are Sensing types and only 25% are Intuitive types (Myers and McCaulley 1985). Comparatively speaking, the current sample includes a higher percentage of Intuitive types than would be found in the general population.

Interpretation seems to offer opportunities for those who are highly proficient at managing concrete details (S) as well as those who favor broad abstractions (N). By way of explanation, upon examination of the Sensing category in a more in-depth fashion, one notes that these types have a good memory for facts and details and are talented at dealing with specifics. Sensing types are performance-oriented. They tend to focus on the here and now. "Sensors at their best are clear and accurate readers of the facts in the immediate situation" (Barr and Barr 1989: 56). Moreover, they prefer tasks that require soundness of understanding. These are all traits which can easily be related to the task of interpretation.

C. Thinking vs. Feeling

With respect to the third bipolar division, the hypothesis that interpreters tend to be logical, analytical Thinkers (T) is buttressed by the data. Thinking types outnumber Feeling types almost two to one. By way of further elaboration, Thinkers prefer precise work and tend to speak and write straight to the point. They are not only good at organizing information but at synthesizing it as well. Setting high standards of achievement for both themselves and others

is another characteristic of Thinkers (Silver and Hanson 1980). It is not surprising, then, that a majority of the sample is represented by Thinking types.

A comparison of Thinkers' and Feelers' reactions to stress may shed some light on the fact that the interpretation profession attracts more Thinkers than Feelers: "One big difference between Thinkers and Feelers is that Ts want to confront a stressful situation head-on, get it out of the way, and get back on track. Fs want to avoid it at all costs, hoping that it will simply go away" (Kroeger and Thuesen 1992: 235). Moreover, Thinkers "are able to stay cool, calm and objective in situations when everyone else is upset" (Kroeger and Thuesen 1988: 18). As previously stated, interpreters must constantly manage the stress of not knowing a word, interpreting for a fast speaker, and so on. They simply cannot avoid tense situations, which is what Feeling types prefer to do.

D. Judging vs. Perceiving

Finally, the prediction that interpreters would be mostly Judging (J) types is not supported. Although the distribution is not as close as it is for the E/I and S/N scales, approximately 56% of our sample are "J" and 44% are "P". This is also quite unexpected, for it was thought that interpreters would be extremely concerned with organization and closure, not easygoing as is the P's characterization.

On the other hand, one can offer an explanation for the high percentage of Ps. Perceiving types have a tendency to be curious, open-minded and often "fly by the seat of their pants". Of course, interpreters are required to do just this quite regularly inasmuch as they are under extreme pressure to convey the source language message on the spot. The perfect word may not always come to them in a split second, and so they often have to choose a less attractive alternative. Similarly, if interpreters are forced to omit a word because they don't know it and cannot glean the meaning from context, they simply have to accept the fact that they missed it and go on. In these cases, good interpreters cannot and will not allow themselves to become bogged down by focusing on what should have been said, but rather must continue/persevere and interpret subsequent material to the best of their ability. Some interpreters pride themselves on "winging it" and often discuss how they handled a difficult concept or vocabulary problem (or, conversely, did not). Judgers become stressed when they lose control of a situation (Kroeger and Thuesen 1992). This brings to mind the previous discussion of interpreters being required to play a subordinate role to the speaker. Although there are more Js than Ps in our sample, the 44% which are Perceivers may be better at dealing with some of the stressful situations which typify the interpretation profession.

E. The ISTJ profile

Inasmuch as the largest group in the current sample is ISTJ (approximately 18%), it is useful to examine this personality type in greater detail. According to Kroeger and Thuesen (1988), ISTJs are the "most private of the sixteen types" (215). ISTJs can be best characterized as "trustees" (Keirsey and Bates 1984: 189). If one single adjective had to be selected for the ISTJs, it would be "dependable". Of interest in that ISTJs represent only about 6% of the population in general (Keirsey and Bates 1984). They are quite sedate and serious, and prefer to perform their assignments without fanfare or flourish. ISTJs are interested in being thorough, and pay great attention to detail. In this connection, they "absorb and enjoy using an immense number of facts" (Myers 1980: 104). Kroeger and Thuesen write that ISTJs are "contemplative, quiet, grounded, objective, accountable, and conservative" (1992: 240). Keirsey and Bates (1984) continue:

> [ISTJs] … communicate a message of reliability and stability. [They] ... make excellent bank examiners, auditors, accountants. ... ISTJs will see that resources are delivered when and where they are supposed to be; material will be in the right place at the right time. And ISTJs would prefer that this be the case with people, too. (190)

Moreover, one of the ISTJs' strengths is the ability to act quickly, and they are "rock solid" in emergencies (Kroeger and Thuesen 1992: 303). On the other hand, the unknown is considered to be a stress producer for the ISTJ (Kroeger and Thuesen 1992).

Levesque (2001), in her book on creativity and personality characteristics, names the ISTJ the "Navigator" (55). She writes:

> Knowledge of facts and events and a sense of history are important in making sense out of new situations and bringing invaluable experience to bear on problems (72).

Scherdin (1994) reports on an MBTI study of 1600 librarians sponsored by the Association for College and Research Libraries (ACRL). Of the 16 possible type configurations, ISTJ ranked first, a full 16.5% of the sample. When the general population is examined, however, one finds that only 7% were ISTPs based on 1985 data (Myers and McCaulley 1985) and a mere 5.4% fell into this category in a 1998 sample (Quenk 1998). As a result, ISTPs are more than twice as numerous (1985 data) and over three times as numerous (1998 data) among librarians as they are within the general population. It is interesting to think about the general traits of ISTPs and ponder how/why these individuals would be drawn to professions as seemingly diverse as interpretation and library science.

Inasmuch as 75% of the current sample is female, it is also useful to examine particular characteristics of ISTJ women. Kroeger and Thuesen (1988) offer the following observations:

> While all Thinking females swim upstream in our society, this is particularly true for female ISTJs. The responsible, driven nature of this type, while admirable, flies in the face of traditionally 'feminine' traits ... ... ISTJ is often dubbed 'the macho type' - a label with which few women would feel comfortable (but which doesn't necessarily bother those ISTJ women. (216)

Of interest is a parallel which can be drawn between comments from Henderson's 1980 study and the ISTJ profile offered by Keirsey and Bates (1984). Cited in Henderson's survey is the description "outwardly cool but emotionally unstable" (222). Keirsey and Bates (1984) write: "Often this type seem [sic] to have ice in their veins, for people fail to see an ISTJs [sic] vulnerability to criticism" (190). However, stability is considered to be one of the ISTJ's strongest characteristics. On the other hand, Keirsey and Bates (1984) write: "ISTJs have a distaste for and distrust of fanciness in speech, dress, or home" (191). Henderson's data include a comment made about interpreters by translators: "if female, dresses elegantly and presents herself well" (1980: 223). Whereas the first one appears to be quite accurate, the second is in sharp contrast.

F. National (US) type distribution statistics

If one examines a "national representative sample" (Myers *et al* 1998)[6] of types in the United States, the group which is most represented across the board (excluding gender differences) is ISFJ at 13.8%. The least common type is INFJ (1.5%) followed closely by ENTJ (1.8%). The most prevalent type among females is also ISFJ (19.4%); among males, it is ISTJ (16.4%). Least common among females are ENTJ and INTJ (tied at 0.9%), and the rarest type among males is INFJ (1.2%) The reader will remember that ISTJ is the most common type found in our data (and the one which occurs most frequently among males in the national sample), yet the majority of our subjects are women.

G. Additional group - Characteristics analyses

1. Actors

Inasmuch as interpreters are often compared to actors because of their exuberance, flair for public speaking, and desire to be in the public eye, it was

6 The "National Representative Sample" consists of 1,478 males and 1,531 females, totaling 3,009.

decided to compare personality data gathered by the MBTI on a sample of 52 actors[7].

The results are quite interesting, as the comparison showed only one major difference: While actors tend to favor Intuition strongly (81% vs. 19% Sensing), slightly more than 51 per cent of the interpreter sample prefers Sensing ($\underline{I} = 2.23$, $p < .01$). As a result, the current group showed higher representations of the ST ($\underline{I} = 2.39$, $p < .01$), SJ ($\underline{I} = 2.73$, $p < .01$), and IS ($\underline{I} = 3.63$, Fisher's exact $p = .01$) combinations. While some interpreters may well display considerable acting skill, they prefer Sensing more than twice as often as might be expected if acting talent were that helpful. The reader will remember that the current interpreter data contain an approximately equal number of Sensors and Intuitive types. When compared with actors, however, the current study includes a much larger group of Sensors than the actor sample. This result also holds true for the "ST" type combination. Moreover, there are fewer "NT"s among actors than in our population. Surprisingly, the data show an almost equal distribution between the Extraverts and Introverts. Finally, the interpreter group is represented by "IS" types much more frequently than the actor group.

2. Level of education

Interpreters generally tend to be well-educated. Schweda Nicholson's survey of United Nations and free-lance interpreters demonstrates that virtually all interpreters have a Bachelor's degree, and many have a Master's (1986a, 1989). It is for this reason (and for the recurring emphasis on "intellectual curiosity" as a trait ascribed to interpreters) that a MBTI comparison between the current sample and college graduates is included. With only one major exception, interpreter trainees are very much like college graduates[8]. The EI, SN, and TF scales showed no differences. On the JP scale, however, interpreters include a higher than expected proportion of Perceptive types. While about 32 per cent of college graduates are Perceivers, 44 per cent of the interpreters appear in this category ($\underline{I} = 1.39$, $p < .05$). As a result, the interpreters had higher proportions of EPs ($\underline{I} = 1.56$, $p < .01$), and almost twice as many TPs as would be expected ($\underline{I} = 1.96$, $p < .01$). Thus, interpretation appears to attract a greater percentage of Perceptive types who are college graduates.

3. Smaller sample analyses

Dividing our sample of 68 cases into smaller groups and running Chi-square analyses of various proportions loses statistical power. Thus, the comparisons

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7 The personality profile data for the "actor" and "level of education" comparative analyses were taken from the *CAPT-MBTI Atlas* (Macdaid *et* al 1986).

8 For this analysis, *CAPT-MBTI Atlas* tables for males and females were combined (N = 14,769) (Macdaid *et al* 1986).

discussed below can only be considered suggestive at best. More research is required to gather sufficient data to make such comparisons reliable.

TABLE 3. Regular (R) trainees N = 28

ISTJ N = 5 % = 17.86	ISFJ N = 2 % = 7.14	INFJ N = 1 % = 3.57	INTJ N = 1 % = 3.57
ISTP N = 0 % = 0.00	ISFP N = 0 % = 0.00	INFP N = 1 % = 3.57	INTP N = 2 % = 7.14
ESTP N = 3 % = 10.71	ESFP N = 1 % = 3.57	ENFP N = 3 % = 10.71	ENTP N = 1 % = 3.57
ESTJ N = 2 % = 7.14	ESFJ N = 1 % = 3.57	ENFJ N = 2 % = 7.14	ENTJ N = 3 % = 10.71

I=Introvert, E=Extravert, S=Sensing, N=Intuitive, F=Feeling, T=Thinking, J=Judging, P=Perceiving.

Distribution of the four preferences for TABLE 3:

	N	%
E	16	57.14
I	12	42.86
S	14	50.00
N	14	50.00
T	17	60.71
F	11	39.29
J	17	60.71
P	11	39.29

TABLE 3 shows the type configurations of the Regular(R) trainees (N = 28). Dominant in this group is ISTJ, a result which is consistent with our overall analysis in TABLE 1. Extraverts dominate, but not strongly. Sensors and Intuitors are evenly distributed, while the T/F and J/P scales show a relatively strong preference for the TJ combination.

TABLE 4. Vancouver (V) trainees N = 12

ISTJ N = 1 % = 8.33	ISFJ N = 0 % = 0.00	INFJ N = 0 % = 0.00	INTJ N = 0 % = 0.00
ISTP N = 1 % = 8.33	ISFP N = 0 % = 0.00	INFP N = 1 % = 8.33	INTP N = 2 % = 16.67
ESTP N = 1 % = 8.33	ESFP N = 1 % = 8.33	ENFP N = 1 % = 8.33	ENTP N = 2 % = 16.67
ESTJ N = 0 % = 0.00	ESFJ N = 0 % = 0.00	ENFJ N = 1 % = 8.33	ENTJ N = 1 % = 8.33

I=Introvert, E=Extravert, S=Sensing, N=Intuitive, F=Feeling, T=Thinking, J=Judging, P=Perceiving.

Distribution of the four preferences for TABLE 4:

	N	%
E	7	58.33
I	5	41.67
S	4	33.33
N	8	66.67
T	8	66.67
F	4	33.33
J	3	25.00
P	9	75.00

The 12 Vancouver subjects (TABLE 4) show a high percentage of Perceptive types ($\underline{I} = 1.70$, Fisher's exact $p = .03$), and especially TP ($\underline{I} = 1.89$, $p < .05$). As the reader shall see below, this preference may be influenced by those specializing in Spanish.

TABLE 5. Government (G) trainees N = 19

ISTJ N = 6 % = 31.58	ISFJ N = 1 % = 5.26	INFJ N = 1 % = 5.26	INTJ N = 0 % = 0.00
ISTP N = 0 % = 0.00	ISFP N = 1 % = 5.26	INFP N = 2 % = 10.53	INTP N = 1 % = 5.26
ESTP N = 1 % = 5.26	ESFP N = 0 % = 0.00	ENFP N = 0 % = 0.00	ENTP N = 0 % = 0.00
ESTJ N = 3 % = 15.79	ESFJ N = 2 % = 10.53	ENFJ N = 0 % = 0.00	ENTJ N = 1 % = 5.26

I=Introvert, E=Extravert, S=Sensing, N=Intuitive, F=Feeling, T=Thinking, J=Judging, P=Perceiving.

Distribution of the four preferences for TABLE 5:

	N	%
E	7	36.84
I	12	63.16
S	14	73.68
N	5	26.32
T	12	63.16
F	7	36.84
J	14	73.68
P	5	26.32

The 19 Government language specialists (TABLE 5) prefer Sensing almost one and one-half times more than the rest of the sample ($\underline{I} = 1.43$, Fisher's exact $p = .03$). In fact, there are nearly twice as many SJs ($\underline{I} = 1.72$, $p < .01$) than in the full group. A full one-third of the Government subset falls into the ISTJ category.

TABLE 6. Not Finish (NF) trainees N = 9

ISTJ N = 0 % = 0.00	ISFJ N = 1 % = 11.11	INFJ N = 0 % = 0.00	INTJ N = 1 % = 11.11
ISTP N = 1 % = 11.11	ISFP N = 0 % = 0.00	INFP N = 0 % = 0.00	INTP N = 1 % = 11.11
ESTP N = 0 % = 0.00	ESFP N = 0 % = 0.00	ENFP N = 1 % = 11.11	ENTP N = 2 % = 22.22
ESTJ N = 1 % = 11.11	ESFJ N = 0 % = 0.00	ENFJ N = 0 % = 0.00	ENTJ N = 1 % = 11.11

I=Introvert, E=Extravert, S=Sensing, N=Intuitive, F=Feeling, T=Thinking, J=Judging, P=Perceiving.

Distribution of the four preferences for TABLE 6:

	N	%
E	5	55.55
I	4	44.44
S	3	33.33
N	6	66.66
T	7	77.77
F	2	22.22
J	4	44.44
P	5	55.55

There were 9 students who enrolled in but did not finish the one-year, four-course program (TABLE 6: NF). Although the NF category is very small, the data show that Intuitors outnumber Sensing types two to one and that Thinking types are more than three times as prevalent as Feeling types.

TABLE 7. Hawaii Applicants (HA) N = 56

ISTJ N = 7 % = 12.50	ISFJ N = 4 % = 7.14	INFJ N = 1 % = 1.79	INTJ N = 8 % = 14.29
ISTP N = 1 % = 1.79	ISFP N = 0 % = 0.00	INFP N = 4 % = 7.14	INTP N = 4 % = 7.14
ESTP N = 0 % = 0.00	ESFP N = 1 % = 1.79	ENFP N = 6 % = 10.71	ENTP N = 0 % = 0.00
ESTJ N = 8 % = 14.29	ESFJ N = 1 % = 1.79	ENFJ N = 2 % = 3.57	ENTJ N = 9 % = 16.07

I=Introvert, E=Extravert, S=Sensing, N=Intuitive, F=Feeling, T=Thinking, J=Judging, P=Perceiving.

Distribution by the four preferences for TABLE 7:

	N	%
E	27	48.21
I	29	51.79
S	22	39.29
N	34	60.71
T	37	66.07
F	19	33.93
J	40	71.43
P	16	28.57

A comparison of 40 trainees from Delaware, Hawaii (R) and Vancouver (V) with an additional 56 individuals who applied to the Hawaii Program ((HA) TABLE 7) who did not enroll is also included. The most significant difference appeared among Judging types who predominated in the non-enrollers 71% vs. 29% ($\underline{I}$ = 1.46, Fisher's exact p = .05). Over one-half of these applicants were TJs (58%; $\underline{I}$ = 7.80, p = .05). The reader will remember that this profile agrees with the preliminary hypothesis regarding the "typical" interpreter. Under-represented groups include EPs, SPs, and TPs (Fisher's ps < .05). It is difficult to know why these people did not enroll. Some reports indicated personal obstacles (e.g., inability to find a babysitter, conflict between a work schedule and the hours at which the courses were offered) and other circumstances

beyond their control. There is no clear indication that those who did not register refrained from doing so because of personality preferences.

4. Specific language groups in combination with English
   a. Spanish

With respect to possible differences based on working languages, it is important to note that TABLE 2 shows that almost half of the subjects are Spanish speakers. This subset differed from the whole sample in its higher percentage for Perceptive ($\underline{I} = 1.38$, $p < .05$). Nearly one half of these, 13, were NPs ($\underline{I} = 1.58$, $p < .01$). The interest in flexibility and spontaneity may be related to the native language or the culture from which the interpreters come (Simon 1987).

TABLE 8. Chinese (C) trainees N = 17

ISTJ N = 3 % = 17.65	ISFJ N = 3 % = 17.65	INFJ N = 1 % = 5.88	INTJ N = 1 % = 5.88
ISTP N = 2 % = 11.76	ISFP N = 0 % = 0.00	INFP N = 0 % = 0.00	INTP N = 3 % = 17.65
ESTP N = 2 % = 11.76	ESFP N = 0 % = 0.00	ENFP N = 0 % = 0.00	ENTP N = 0 % = 0.00
ESTJ N = 1 % = 5.88	ESFJ N = 1 % = 5.88	ENFJ N = 0 % = 0.00	ENTJ N = 0 % = 0.00

I=Introvert, E=Extravert, S=Sensing, N=Intuitive, F=Feeling, T=Thinking, J=Judging, P=Perceiving.

Distribution by the four preferences for TABLE 8:

	N	%
E	4	23.53
I	13	76.47
S	12	70.59
N	5	29.41
T	12	70.59
F	5	29.41
J	10	58.82
P	7	41.18

b. Chinese

Seventeen of the current sample specialize in Mandarin Chinese (TABLE 8). A high proportion of these were Introverts (I = 1.58, Fisher's exact $p < .05$), especially IS (I = 1.68, $p < .05$), about one half of this subset. Conversely, none of the Chinese fall into the EN category (I = 0.00, Fisher's exact $p < .05$). The idea of "inscrutable Asians" finds tentative support in this particular group. Introverts are more reserved and less communicative than Extraverts, the favorite American preference (Myers and McCaulley 1985).

TABLE 9. Japanese (JA) trainees N = 11

ISTJ N = 2 % = 18.18	ISFJ N = 1 % = 9.09	INFJ N = 0 % = 0.00	INTJ N = 1 % = 9.09
ISTP N = 0 % = 0.00	ISFP N = 0 % = 0.00	INFP N = 0 % = 0.00	INTP N = 1 % = 9.09
ESTP N = 0 % = 0.00	ESFP N = 0 % = 0.00	ENFP N = 0 % = 0.00	ENTP N = 0 % = 0.00
ESTJ N = 2 % = 18.18	ESFJ N = 0 % = 0.00	ENFJ N = 1 % = 9.09	ENTJ N = 3 % = 27.27

I=Introvert, E=Extravert, S=Sensing, N=Intuitive, F=Feeling, T=Thinking, J=Judging, P=Perceiving.

Distribution by the four preferences for TABLE 9:

	N	%
E	6	54.55
I	5	45.45
S	5	45.45
N	6	54.55
T	9	81.82
F	2	18.18
J	10	90.91
P	1	9.09

c. Japanese

Out of 11 trainees specializing in Japanese (TABLE 9), 10 are Judging types (I = 1.63, Fisher's exact $p = .02$). In comparison, a sample of 47 students of

Elementary Japanese at the University of Hawaii included 30 (about 64%) Judging types (Moody: Personal communication 1991). Although personality is basically genetic (Bouchard *et al* 1990; Bouchard and McGue 1990; Myers 1980), it may be true that a particular culture encourages development which favors qualities of organization and decisiveness.

d. Arabic and French

Only six trainees fall into each of the Arabic and French groups. Unfortunately, these numbers are simply too small to permit speculation.

7. Conclusions

Henderson (1980) offers a summary profile after analyzing all of his data:

> What then is the 'typical' interpreter like? A self-reliant, articulate extrovert, quick and intelligent, a jack of all trades and something of an actor, superficial, arrogant, liking variety and at times anxious and frustrated - such are only the major features of a complex picture which ... is of course a caricature, but the picture is composed from informed observations (223).

Interpretation attracts people of all personality types. At least one subject appears in each of the 16 categories. Looking back to some of the personality characteristics listed by other authors in Section III.B. (Review of the Interpretation Literature), the variety of traits represented there also figures in the current sample.

One immediately sees the qualities of the Extraverts in their preference for variety, their versatility and their knack for communicating. On the other side of the EI scale, one notes the analytical skills and a tendency to be a loner among the Introverts. Among the SN group, attention to detail clearly characterizes the Sensing individual. Curiosity, versatility, and open-mindedness are traits of the Intuitive person. Proceeding to the TF scale, Thinkers are represented by their concentration, arrogance, analysis skills, and the ability to remain cool under pressure. Feelers are sensitive, seek harmony, and work well as members of a team. Finally, on the JP preference scale, Judging types are decisive, self-confident, strong in their convictions, and self-controlled. Perceivers, on the other hand, are versatile, tolerant, open-minded, spontaneous and happy to "go with the flow". As such, it appears that the profession may offer opportunities for all personality types to exercise their preferred ways of interacting, deciding and being.

However, there are some favorites. While the trainees and language specialists in the sample were about evenly divided between E-I, S-N, and J-P,

the T-F scale showed a meaningful difference: Thinking types outnumber Feeling types two to one. This finding is extremely significant. In this connection, in an examination of the general population, approximately 60% of males are Ts while about 65% of females are Fs (Myers and McCaulley 1985). In this sample, females outnumber males about four to one, yet Thinking types predominate. To conclude, then, most of the predominantly female participants in the current study display a preference for impersonal, logical analysis as well as content and ideas ("head") as opposed to focusing on traditional feminine, subjective values and the promotion of group harmony ("heart"). Based on the limited scope of this study, it is interesting to note that the current sample includes a great number of "Thinking" females. This result is not a surprising one, given the demands of the interpretation profession. The fact that there are just about equal numbers of Extraverts and Introverts goes against conventional wisdom in terms of peoples' off-the-cuff impressions of interpreters' personalities.

In terms of the value and potential use of these data, having the personality profiles of interpreter trainees is of great interest, in principle. However, in terms of looking at other components of a screening exam, for example, the author is confident that all interpreter trainers would agree that skills such as L1 and L2 abilities are far more important than personality type.

However, one's personality may definitely have an effect on that person's comfort level in different situations as well as on processing and organizational behavior. Of course, some areas of work life can be controlled by the individual worker but others cannot. Clearly, many factors play a role in one's professional and personal development over time. This study shows that the personality profiles of interpreters can be as varied as the topics with which they work.

As far as suggestions for further research, other types of interpreters could be surveyed. The emphasis in the existing literature has been on conference interpreters and interpreter trainees. It would be worthwhile to investigate other groups of interpreters, such as those who work in the courts and community service settings. An expanded sample of various ethnic groups might inform us about cross-cultural differences and similarities, perhaps breaking down some of the stereotypical images. Additionally, it would be desirable to include a larger number of subjects.

In summary, the MBTI is an interesting, broadly-used and widely-accepted personality inventory. It is clear that people seem to enjoy learning about their preferences for interacting, working, socializing, thinking and organizing. Isabel Briggs Myers writes:

> The MBTI is primarily concerned with the valuable differences in people that result from where they to focus their attention, the way they like to

> take in information, the way they like to decide, and the kind of lifestyle they adopt (1987:4).

Understanding how these differences appear in the interpreter population provides insight into the personalities of those choosing this profession. This perspective will assist both those involved in training and individuals interested in learning whether they may be suited to interpretation careers.

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