

# Cooperativeness – A necessary trait for interpreters? A study on temperament and character dimensions of experts in different fields

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## **Abstract**

### **Aims and Objectives:**

The aim of the present study was to investigate whether particular temperament and personality traits are more characteristic to interpreters' expert performance than to expert performance in other fields.

### **Design:**

To these ends, the Temperament and Character Inventory by Cloninger et al. (1994) and the distractibility scale of the Revised Dimensions of Temperament Survey by Windle (1992) were used.

### **Data and Analyses:**

The data was gathered from two groups of interpreters (simultaneous and consecutive) and was compared to one group of foreign language teachers and one of non-linguistic experts from different fields of society. The group size varied between 20 and 23 participants each. The analyses

were carried out with multivariate analysis of variance, supplemented with Bonferroni corrected contrasts.

### **Findings:**

The results seem to indicate that temperament and character traits may have different impacts on different expert groups. In this study, in comparison to the control groups of foreign language teachers and non-linguistic experts, high cooperativeness was found to be more characteristic to simultaneous and consecutive interpreters. Cooperativeness also appears to be valued by recruiters and trainers of interpreters, for instance.

### **Originality:**

The study was the first one comparing interpreters' temperament and character dimensions with those of other expert groups, such as foreign language teachers and non-linguistic experts.

### **Significance and Limitations:**

Among the different temperament and personality traits, at least cooperativeness seems to have a connection to the abilities and skills needed in the profession of an interpreter. More research, however, is needed to reveal possible connections of various temperament and personality traits with expertise in different fields. In this particular case, additional studies could show whether individuals with high cooperativeness become more easily interested in such professions as interpreting, or whether the high cooperativeness is a result of more experience and expertise in interpreting.

**Keywords** [Consecutive interpreter](#), [simultaneous interpreter](#), [foreign language teacher](#), [non-linguistic expert](#), [temperament trait](#), [character trait](#), [cooperativeness](#)