

## **A Study on the Volunteers of Emergency and Disaster Interpreting Initiative (ARC) in Turkey\***

Türkiye'deki Acil Durum ve Afet Çevirmenliği Girişimi (ARÇ) Gönüllüleri Üzerinde Bir Çalışma

Aymil DOĞAN\*\*

### ***Abstract***

The earthquakes of 1999 in Marmara region in Turkey led the academicians of translation and interpretation to launch interpreter training programmes in collaboration with Turkish Civil Defence and Turkish Translation Association within the frame of a protocol, which enabled around 300 people to receive the basic training of 100 hours and a hundred more to be merely enrolled due to the time constraint for training. The aim of this study was to present the results of the survey conducted on these ARC members and to evaluate the outcomes of Emergency and Disaster Interpreting Initiative (ARC) after a ten-year endeavour. The method used was a descriptive one and the results were given in frequencies and percentages. Out of the 400 registered members the number of the respondents who were found to be accessible were only 62 in total. The findings demonstrated the following results: 1. The respondents were mostly from Istanbul; Ankara ranked the second and Izmir the third. 2. The number of the respondents to the survey were mostly among the ones who were enrolled to the Initiative between 2000-2007. 3. The respondents of the survey were mostly between the 26-30 age interval and unmarried. 4. Most of the respondents were either employed or both student and employed. 5. University graduates ranked the first in educational status. 6. Most respondents learnt about ARC through their teachers. 7. The respondents were mostly from the group who received a-hundred-hour basic training. 8. The total number of the members who joined the drills was less than the ones who never joined any of the activities. 9. Turkish, English, Russian, Spanish, German, Italian, French were the languages, the members could provide interpreting service in total. 10. The respondents tried to improve their knowledge and skills by joining some other activities after the trainings. 11. The Initiative act as a driving force for the respondents to assume the responsibility to inform their environments about the measures to be taken against

---

\* A part of this article is presented at a symposium titled "Community Interpreting in Turkey" on Nov. 22, 2010 organized at Bogazici University, by Translation Studies Department thereof.

\*\* Assoc. Prof. Dr., Hacettepe University, Faculty of Letters, Translation and Interpretation Department, aymildogan@gmail.com

disasters and about the activities of ARC. 12. The respondents also made efforts to increase the membership number of ARC. 13. The respondents were not so good at checking the e-mails sent by the tasking unit but they were better at getting into contact through sms or telephone-call chains. At the end of the study the suggestions of both the researcher and the respondents were listed.

**Keywords:** emergency and disaster interpreting, interpreter-in-aid-at-disasters, community interpreting, ARC, IAD

### **Öz**

Türkiye'nin Marmara Bölgesinde 1999'da meydana gelen depremler, mütercim tercümanlık akademisyenlerinin, Sivil Savunma ve Çeviri Derneği ile protokol kapsamında işbirliği yaparak Acil Durum ve Afet Çevirmenliği İnisiyatifi (ARÇ) kurarak afet durumlarında hizmet verebilecek çevirmen yetiştirme eğitimini başlatmalarını beraberinde getirmiştir. Bu kapsamda, yaklaşık 300 kişiye 100 saatlik temel eğitim verilmiş, yüz kadar üye de ARÇ'a zaman kısıtlılığı nedeniyle eğitim almadan sadece üye olarak katılmıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, bu ARÇ üyeleri üzerinde gerçekleştirilen bir araştırmanın sonuçlarını sunmak ve on yıllık bir çabanın sonunda ARÇ İnisiyatifi'nin gelmiş olduğu noktayı değerlendirmektir. Betimsel yöntemin kullanıldığı çalışmada sonuçlar frekans ve yüzde ile sunulmuştur. Kayıtlı 400 üyeden sadece 62 tanesi anketi yanıtlayarak geri dönüş yapmıştır. Çalışmada betimsel yöntem kullanılmış, bulgular frekans ve yüzde şeklinde sunulmuştur. 400 kayıtlı üyeden ulaşılabilen cevaplayıcı sayısı toplam 62'dir. Bulgular şu sonuçları ortaya çıkarmıştır: 1. Cevaplayıcıların çoğu İstanbul'dandır, Ankara ikinci, İzmir ise üçüncü sıradadır. 2. Cevaplayıcılar çoğunlukla 2000-2007 arasındaki dönemde kaydolanlardan oluşmaktadır. 3. Cevaplayıcılar çoğunlukla 26-30 yaş aralığındadırlar ve evli değildirler. 4. Cevaplayıcıların çoğu ya çalışandır ya da hem çalışma yaşamını hem de öğrenciliği birlikte yürütmektedirler. 5. Eğitim durumu açısından lisans mezunları çoğunluğu oluşturmaktadır. 6. Birçok cevaplayıcı, ARÇ hakkında ilk bilgiyi öğretmenlerinden almıştır. 7. Cevaplayıcıların çoğu yüz saatlik temel eğitimi almışlardır. 8. Tatbikatlara katılanların toplam sayısı hiçbir tatbikata katılmamış olanlardan azdır. 9. Türkçe, İngilizce, Rusça, İspanyolca, Almanca, İtalyanca, Fransızca çeviri hizmeti sağlanan dillerdir. 10. Eğitimlerden sonra cevaplayıcılar bilgi ve becerilerini arttırmak için başka kurslara da katılmışlardır. 11. İnisiyatif, cevaplayıcıların, çevrelerini afetlere karşı önlem alma ve ARÇ'ın faaliyetleri hakkında bilgilendirme konusunda sorumluluk almaları konusunda bir itici güç oluşturmuştur. 12. Cevaplayıcılar ARÇ'ın üye sayısını arttırma konusunda gayret sarfetmektedirler. 13. Cevaplayıcılar, e-mail adreslerini kontrol etmekte ihmalkar davrandıklarını, fakat telefon ya da sms zinciri ile irtibat kurmakta çok daha başarılı olduklarını belirtmişlerdir. Çalışmanın sonunda hem araştırmacının hem de üyelerin önerileri maddeler halinde sıralanmıştır.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** acil durum ve afet çevirmenliği, toplum çevirmenliği, afette rehber çevirmenlik, ARÇ, IAD

## **1. Introduction**

Emergency and Disaster Interpreting Initiative (ARC) was established in Turkey in the aftermath of the devastating earthquakes in Marmara region in 1999. Until then there were no studies nor organized activities as to community interpreting in Turkey, except for the sporadic services at courts and refugee camps provided by any person capable of speaking the needed languages. However, with the subsequent earthquakes in 1999, Turkey suddenly faced with many foreign search and rescue teams coming to Turkey to provide help. At that time Turkey was not prepared to tackle with such devastating disasters and so many search and rescue teams despite the fact that almost the whole country was suffering from frequent earthquakes as the three plates beneath the earth had been shaking Anatolian peninsula from different directions and in different ways for centuries. Those having occurred in Marmara region were perhaps the most striking ones as Marmara region was a highly populated industrial and commercial area. The two earthquakes led the academicians of translation and interpretation to launch interpreter training programmes in collaboration with Turkish Civil Defence and Turkish Translation Association within the frame of a protocol, which enabled around 300 people to receive the basic training of 100 hours and a hundred more to be merely enrolled due to the time constraint for training. The Initiative was named as “Interpreter-in-Aid-at-Disasters (IAD)” or “Afette Rehber Çevirmenlik (ARÇ)” when the programme was initiated and the academic articles were written in this name. Later the scope was enlarged, thus, the name was changed into Emergency and Disaster Interpreting to encompass wider range of emergency situations and disaster which may require the help of an interpreter. Yet, the acronym ARC, which stands for the Turkish initials of ‘Afette Rehber Çevirmenlik’ was so owned by the members and became so well-known that it was kept as it was even in English texts. Thus, the Initiative, established with a protocol on a triad, consisting of a non-governmental organization, a state institution, and university has assumed a role of social responsibility to fulfil the communication gap arising from language problems during disasters.

Since 2000 training programmes have been held in Turkey to train interpreters to take action during the disasters in case there is a need for translation and/or interpretation. In addition to the activities to train the interpreters, academic studies elucidating various topics falling under emergency and disaster interpreting topic were conducted and published. These studies were carried out by Kurultay, Bulut, Kahraman and Dogan and listed in the References section of this study.

### ***1.1 Aim and Importance of This Study***

The aim of this study was to present the results of the survey prepared to see a big picture of the outcomes of ARC Initiative after a ten-year endeavour and to learn to what extent the ARC members were accessible when they were needed, to make a categorization of their characteristics, to see the effects of training on them and finally to receive their suggestions. This survey was important for the following reasons: First of all, trainings were given to around 300 people and a hundred more were merely enrolled

due to the time constraint for training. The most important thing at this point was to know what number of members would be available to take action in case of a disaster and what their qualifications were. To see if they were available, to ensure their visibility and to receive feedback from them, such kind of a survey was needed.

Thus, the research question of the survey was as follows:

- What is the existing situation regarding the ARC members and ARC activities?

## **2. Methodology**

Descriptive method was used in this study. The survey was conducted through a questionnaire comprised of close-ended and open ended questions.

### **2.1 Respondents**

The population of the survey was around 400 people while the respondents were the 68, who were enrolled to the Initiative at different times from different provinces. Yet, only 62 of them replied to all the questions about themselves and about ARC.

### **2.2 Means of Data Collection and Analysis**

This survey was carried out using a questionnaire administered via telephone calls, vis-à-vis interviews and e-mails. The questionnaire was prepared by the researcher and expert opinions of two academicians were received for content validity. The questionnaire was comprised of both close-ended and open-ended questions. SPSS program was used to analyze the raw data; the results were presented in frequencies and percentages.

### **2.3 Procedure**

The procedure pursued in this study is given below:

- Membership records from Ankara, Izmir and Istanbul ARC Centers were collected for the e-mail addresses and telephone numbers. Approximately 400 members were found to have been enrolled through the ten years of ARC activities. However, it was not possible to get into contact with many of them as they had changed their contact information and neglected to inform the ARC Centers of these changes. The e-mailed questionnaires were bounced back either because of the change in the e-mail company or business address, or sometimes because of the surname change of the female members due to marriage. It also appeared that some members opened special e-mail addresses for the heavy e-mail traffic of ARC group but then gave up checking it. Thus, a lot of time was allocated to trace the people who had been enrolled to the volunteers list of ARC in time, via tiresome telephone calls or e-mails and even facebook.

- Finally, the number of the respondents who were accessible and who answered the questions in the questionnaire were 68; however, the number of the responses having informative value was only 62. Six respondents only replied to the personal information part but did not reply to the questions about ARC.

- Thus, the survey was carried out on 62 volunteers. When more information was needed about their responses, additional telephone calls or vis-à-vis interviews were made.

### 3. Findings

The findings of the survey, the methodology of which is given above, is presented in this section in tables.

#### 3.1 Distribution of Members by Province

The distribution of the members by province is given in Table 1 of this section. As clearly seen Istanbul holds more than half of the memberships by 52%. Ankara is the second by 36% and Izmir the third by 12%. The fact that the respondents are from these three cities doesn't mean that there are no members from other cities. These three cities are the ones where the accessible respondents live.

**Table 1:** Distribution of Members by Province

Province	Percentage (%)
Izmir	12,0
Ankara	36,0
Istanbul	52,0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100,0</b>

#### 3.2 Distribution of Respondents by Their Year of Enrollment in ARC

Table 2 demonstrates the distribution of respondents by the year of enrollment in ARC. It is noteworthy to underscore that the figures given in the list are those of the ones who have participated in the survey and not the whole number of people enrolled in the Initiative or who have received training. For example, in Ankara 47 members were trained during 2001-2005 in three groups. These people received 100 hours training and got their certificates as well. However, only 17 of them have participated in the survey. The number of the respondents responding to the questionnaire is more until 2007; then the number gets less.

**Table 2:** Distribution of Respondents by Their Year of Enrollment in ARC

Year of Enrollment in ARC	Number of Respondents (n)	Percentage (%)
2000	9	14,5
2001	4	6,5
2002	5	8,1
2003	6	9,7
2004	8	12,9
2005	9	14,5
2006	12	19,4
2007	2	3,2
2008	3	4,8
2009	1	1,6
2010	3	4,8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100,0</b>

### **3.3 Distribution of Respondents by Their Marital Status and Age Interval**

The distribution of respondents by marital status and age interval are demonstrated in Table 3. The variables here demonstrate the situation during the survey, which means that the respondents have been younger when they have received the training. As can be seen from the table, the respondents are mostly between 26-30 age interval, which makes one think that they are those members who have received training at the time when it has been intensive. The ones between 31-35 rank the second while the ones between 20-25 are the third. Table 3 shows that most of the respondents are unmarried, followed by the married group, both of which are at the same age interval.

**Table 3:** Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status and Age Interval

Age Intervals	Marital Status						TOTAL	
	Unmarried		Married		Divorced		n	%
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
20-25	9	100,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	<b>9</b>	<b>100,0</b>
26-30	19	70,5	8	9,6	0	0,0	<b>27</b>	<b>100,0</b>
31-35	5	50,0	4	40,0	1	20,0	<b>10</b>	<b>100,0</b>
35-40	1	16,7	5	83,3	0	0,0	<b>6</b>	<b>100,0</b>
41-45	0	0,0	1	50,0	1	50,0	<b>2</b>	<b>100,0</b>
46-50	0	0,0	4	100,0	0	0,0	<b>4</b>	<b>100,0</b>
50 and above	1	25,0	2	50,0	1	25,0	<b>4</b>	<b>100,0</b>

### **3.4 Distribution of Respondents by Their Employment Status**

The distribution of respondents by their employment status is given in Table 4. Most of the respondents (56%) are found to be employed. The respondents who are both student and employed rank the second by 30.6%. There are also retired respondents in addition to students, unemployed ones and the recruited ones by the military, though in small numbers.

**Table 4:** Distribution of Respondents by Employment Status

Employment Status	Distribution in numbers (n)	Percentage (%)
Student	1	1,6
Employed	35	56,5
Both student and employed	19	30,6
Retired	4	6,5
Recruited by military	2	3,2
Unemployed	1	1,6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100,0</b>

### 3.5 Distribution of Respondents by Their Educational Status

The distribution of the respondents by educational status is given in Table 5. It demonstrates that most of the respondents (30%) are university graduates, 22.6% were involved in MA studies and 21% in PhD studies. There are a few respondents in undergraduate programmes.

**Table 5:** Distribution of Respondents by Educational Status

<b>Educational Status</b>	<b>Distribution in numbers (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Undergraduate	3	4,8
Graduate	30	48,4
MA student	7	11,3
MA graduate	7	11,3
PhD student	9	14,5
PhD owner	4	6,5
High School	1	1,6
2-year associate degree programme	1	1,6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100,0</b>

### 3.6 Distribution of Respondents by Their Means of Learning about ARC

The distribution of the respondents by their means of learning about ARC is given in Table 6. Most of the respondents learnt about ARC from their teacher/s. In other words, the teacher is the most effective means in making the people aware and informed about the activities of ARC; friends rank the second, and curriculum the third. There are other means, of course, but they are in small numbers. What is striking is that school medium seems to be the most effective means for raising awareness no matter it be through curriculum, teachers or announcements.

**Table 6:** Distribution of Respondents by Their Means of Learning about ARC

<b>Means of Learning about ARC</b>	<b>Distribution in numbers (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
"I heard about ARC from my friends"	10	16,1
"I heard about ARC from my teacher/s"	30	48,4
"I saw ARC's announcements on the board at school"	3	4,8
"I learnt about ARC through our curriculum"	8	12,9
"I learnt about ARC through other means"	4	6,5
"I learnt about ARC through internet"	5	8,1
"I am among the pioneers of ARC"	2	3,2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100,0</b>

### **3.7 Distribution of Respondents by Their Level of Participation in ARC Activities**

The distribution of the respondents by the level of participation in ARC activities is given in Table 7. It demonstrates that most of the respondents of the survey are the members who have received the hundred-hour basic training of ARC. Members who have received one-day training rank the second, and non-trained enrollments rank the third. There are also respondents from the tasking unit and training group; yet actually these two groups have been the ones who have been self-trained, except for the civil defense and first aid trainings.

**Table 7:** Distribution by Level of Participation in ARC Activities

<b>Level of Participation in ARC Activities</b>	<b>Distribution in Numbers (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Only enrolled but joined no activities	10	16.1
Received one-day training	12	19.4
Received hundred-hour Basic ARC Training	29	46.8
Worked in the Steering Committee	7	11.3
Worked as Trainer	4	6.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### **3.8 Distribution of Respondents by Their Participation in Drills**

Table 8 demonstrates the distribution of the respondents by their participation in the drills. The number of the members who joined all the drills is only 4. The ones who joined many drills are only six. These two groups are constituted from the people who have been the founders and trainers of ARC Initiative. 18 members joined some of the drills, which is also remarkable. The ones who have never joined any drills at all are more in number.

**Table 8:** Distribution by Participation in Drills

<b>Level of Participation in ARC Activities</b>	<b>Distribution in numbers (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Never joined any drill at all	34	54.8
Joined some of the drills	18	29.0
Joined many of the drills	6	9.7
Joined all the drills	4	6.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### **3.8 Responses to Open-ended Questions**

In the questionnaire there were also open-ended questions. A compilation of the responses will be given below:

The languages of the respondents have been as follows: English-Turkish 66.7%; English-Turkish-Spanish 4.2%; English-Turkish-Russian 8.3%; English-German-Italian-Turkish 12.5%; English-French-Turkish 4.2%; German-Turkish 4.2%.

The respondents stated that after the training period they kept on studying and practising to improve their knowledge and skills. 32.3% kept on reading the written material given to them during the trainings and memorizing the terminology. 53.2% participated in the related conferences, watched the related TV programs, searched for documents and websites. 4.8% of the respondents received other trainings such as scuba diving, working with K9 dogs, amateur wireless radio course. 9.7% joined the activities of other NGOs related to disaster management in one way or the other.

The respondents were asked how they made use of the knowledge and skills in their own lives. 35.4% stated that they took measures against earthquakes in their homes; 21.6% stated that they informed their families about what they had learnt. 33.7% informed the people in the environment. 9.3% did not make use of them in any way in their lives.

Another question was tapping the members' efforts to introduce ARC to the environment. Some only informed the closer environment about ARC. Some spoke of ARC in the meetings they joined, and some tried to persuade people in the vicinity to be a member of ARC.

The respondents were asked how often they read the e-mails from ARC. 8 members wrote 'always'; 19 members wrote 'frequently', 21 wrote 'sometimes' and, 14 wrote that they did not pursue the e-mail traffic at all. Yet, when there was a chain of telephone calls or sms messages, most stated that they were able to get involved in realizing the chain. Only a few of the respondents reported that they had missed some calls, thus broke the chain.

## **4. Discussion**

### ***4.1 Distribution of Members by Province***

The organizational activities of ARC were launched in Istanbul by the professors of Istanbul University, namely Turgay Kurultay and Alev Bulut, as a social responsibility and a duty falling on the shoulders of translation and interpretation departments to solve the communication problems with the foreign search and rescue teams and relief teams, which was recognized as a need after the two devastating earthquakes in the Marmara region in 1999. Ankara immediately joined the activities through the efforts of the professor of Hacettepe University, namely Aymil Dogan. Izmir was the third city participating in the training activities by the efforts of a professor of Dokuz Eylul University, namely Aysegul Baser. In the meanwhile other universities were interested in the issue, thus training programmes were also held at Bogazici University and Okan University.

The initiative was launched at Istanbul University owing to the broad vision, multidimensional thinking skill and sense of responsibility of the professors; yet it is significant to keep in mind that Istanbul was and still is a critical province as it is located very near a fault-line, thus, is expected to be hit by an earthquake in 30 years' time. This

is also one of the main reasons why more people are interested in the trainings in that region; furthermore, Marmara earthquakes adversely affected much many more people than any other region in Turkey.

Ankara and Izmir were readily involved in the training activities because the professors were also willing to assume the responsibility to train volunteering interpreters. The involvement of these two universities were significant in the sense that in case of an earthquake having taken place around Marmara and especially one striking Istanbul, the ones to take action will be the members who will be away from Istanbul due to the unfortunate fact that the members in Istanbul may be in difficulty to take action.

#### ***4.2 Distribution of Respondents by Their Year of Enrollment in ARC***

Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondents by their enrollment in ARC. The year 2000 was the time when organizational activities started. The pioneering group assumed the responsibility of the tasking unit as well as the trainings of the members. There were eleven people shown in Table 7, who were the ones in the tasking unit and trainer group. These people always provided impetus for the of the Initiative.

During the last few years ARC trainings lost momentum a bit because it was thought by the trainers and the tasking unit that there were already quite a lot of people trained. Keeping all these members active, providing them opportunities to refresh their knowledge and skills and enhancing their quality were thought to be more important than allocating time and energy to increase the number of members. This may be the reason why less people have been enrolled in the recent years. Sense of belonging is also another factor that should be kept in mind. It is a general tendency among the human beings to have a driving engine in front of them to keep their interest and attention alive. Free will and initiative are higher level characteristics and not everyone can have them to sustain their interest in an activity even if they volunteer to do so. Ten years after the foundation of ARC, less people seem to be actively interested in such a volunteering work now that the wounds of the earthquakes have almost been healed or at least suppressed.

#### ***4.3 Distribution of Respondents by Their Marital Status and Age Interval***

The marital status is important in such activities in the sense that it shows how it affects the involvement of the members into the activities. Regardless of age, the married people usually abstain from getting involved in such activities for many reasons: A tight business schedule or family life are the two at the fore front. The family is an effective factor especially when the spouse and children are concerned. The family in the sense of mother and father is not so effective as the age of the volunteers are mostly in their the early adulthood.

Voluntary action requires free will, social awareness, and behaviour based on prosocial principlism, which develop through the years' of experience. School is an appropriate institution to develop these, whereas, family, peers and environment are other factors. If voluntary action is considered to be more virtuous than materialistic gains and

endorsed by the members of the social groups the person belongs to, then the number of persons willing to get involved in such activities may increase; otherwise, the family or environment act as an obstacle even when the person is volunteering to join the activities, feeling socially responsible. Thus, it is meaningful that most of the respondents are between 20-30-year interval.

#### ***4.4 Distribution of Respondents by Their Employment Status***

The distribution of the respondents by the employment status shows that more than half of the respondents are employed, whereas, the second majority group consists of the ones who are both students and employed ones, doing their MA and PhD studies. Both groups are the ones who are between the 20-35 age interval, most of whom have received a hundred-hour training. In Table 5 there is only one student; however, there seems to be 3 undergraduate students in Table 4. Two of those students are both studying at the undergraduate level and employed as well. It is also interesting to see that among the respondents there are people doing their military services, some retired people, and one unemployed.

#### ***4.5 Distribution of Respondents by Their Educational Status***

As stated in the above section the respondents of this survey are mostly the undergraduate students of the past years or the graduate students at the time of the survey because the survey encompassed a time interval of ten years; thus the first group of students having received the training get ten years older and start their graduate education. The level of awareness seems to be higher in the group who are educated and living their early adult age, and adult age. The tasking unit, for example, is almost the core of the initiative, which consists of the retired, the professors at universities and the employed group, having enough perseverance, devotion and commitment to carry on with the studies and activities without feeling hopeless or discouraged.

#### ***4.6 Distribution of Respondents by Their Means of Learning about ARC***

Table 6 provides consistent results with the tables above. For example, it is very natural that the respondents are from the three cities though there are other members in other cities. Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir are the cities where the trainings have been provided by the universities. Undoubtedly, educational environment is the most suitable place for the dissemination of information. It is again very natural that the members mostly learnt about ARC through the school medium; peers are also important in disseminating information and providing companion to the person in joining the activity. It should be kept in mind that people may make use of internet to learn about such an activity; thus informing people through internet should be among the targets of ARC. There are other means as well. Raising awareness in the people good at languages is not only important for enrolling qualified people, but also for calling the attention of the authorities in the country to get into effective cooperation with ARC Initiative.

#### ***4.7 Distribution of Respondents by Their Level of Participation in ARC Activities***

As can be seen in Table 7, 64.6% of the respondents constitute the last three groups in the table, the ones who received hundred-hour basic training, which also include the tasking unit and trainers. 35.5% of the respondents are the ones who received one-day training or only enrolled without being involved in the activities. This rate is also very important because ARC Initiative also tries to find the potential in the community who may be helpful during a disaster. Sometimes a language teacher at the local school, who knows the local dialect or the speaks local language may be much more functional than a member who is not familiar with the region and the language spoken by the local people. Thus, disseminating information about ARC and introducing its activities is very important in this sense as well.

#### ***4.8 Distribution of Respondents by Their Participation in Drills***

Drills are considerably important in the ARC training. The practice of what is learnt during the basic training is realized during these drills. The scenario activities of the basic training are designed to create the learners a medium where they can practise the rules, knowledge and skills gained through the training process; yet simulation of a disaster is much more effective in providing the learner with the necessary knowledge and skills.

The drills may be held by the civil defense or a non-organizational search-and-rescue team (SAR). In one type of a drill, the location with damaged houses can be the site of the drill. For example, a village at the outer skirts of Istanbul near Omerli Dam was once a suitable place for the simulation practices because there were buildings demolished by the municipality due to their being unlicensed constructions. There were many other SAR teams, medical teams, ambulances, a large camping area and so on. Joining such a drill and experiencing the codes of conduct in situ, trying to apply the interpreting strategies according to the unexpected situations was really a unique experience. Another type of drill is the communication network drill in which governmental and non-governmental bodies collaborate through establishing a network by using various devices such as wireless radios, satellite contacts, etc. A drill such as this was held in Istanbul, including the other related groups in the other cities in a communication network; ARC was one working with a non-organizational SAR team at their headquarters and collaborating with amateur wireless radio users. A third type of drill is the one that can be conducted among the members of ARC to practise communicating by means of telephone-call or sms-message chains. Additionally, an unexpected drill can be launched within the Initiative to see how the members behave.

Joining these kinds of drills requires basic knowledge and skills; otherwise it can be dangerous. Another point is that sometimes the number of people permitted to join the drills may be limited.

#### ***4.9 Responses to the Open-Ended Questions***

The responses to the open-ended questions showed that the members of ARC changed their codes of conduct and got involved in more activities as a part of preparedness

programme to earthquakes. They informed their environment, they took measures at home, started to follow the related news in the media or got in touch with the non-governmental organizations. They also joined other courses to enlarge their knowledge and skills. However, they could have been better in checking the e-mails sent by the tasking unit. The e-mail traffic was especially kept very strict by the moderator and the tasking unit so as to prevent redundant messages. Thus, the e-mails posted to the e-mail group were informative so they should have been checked more frequently. As for the languages, the number of the languages and the members speaking the local languages should be increased.

## **Conclusion**

Emergency and Disaster Interpreting Initiative (ARC) was established as a part of the disaster preparedness programme. A lot of endeavour was made to develop it to the extent that it would be functional when needed. This survey was carried out to take an X-ray of the Initiative and take lessons out of it to pave the way to a better and much functional organization.

The respondents were also asked about their suggestions. These may shed light to the future road-map. Below are their suggestions, many of which are also the suggestions of this paper:

1. The curriculum of the ARC training programme should be reviewed and improved.
2. One-day seminars and hundred-hour trainings should be made wide-spread so that the other provinces will be able to get prepared just in case there is a need.
3. Drills with the other organizations prove to be very efficient for the education of the ARC members so they must be promoted and participation should be maintained.
4. ARC should be introduced more in visual and printed media.
5. Social activities and workshops should be organized to bring the members of different provinces together to establish better communication.
6. Coordination and integration with the governmental institutions should better be established.
7. Foreign institutions should be made aware of the availability of such an initiative in Turkey.
8. Disaster preparedness and emergency and disaster interpreting should be provided as a part of the university curriculum.
9. Academic studies should be carried out in this field as well.
10. Correspondence and communication system should be better established.

## **References**

- Batson, C.D. (1991). The Altruism Question: Towards a social psychological answer, Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum. In Robert S. Feldman (1998), *Social Psychology*, 2nd Edition, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 273-275.
- Bulut, A. & Kurultay, T. (2001). Interpreters-in-Aid-at Disasters (IAD): Community Interpreting in the Process of Disaster Management, *The Translator (The Return to Ethics)* A. Pym (ed) Volume 7, Number 2, 2001, Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 251-263.
- Bulut, A. (2002). The Constraints Manipulating the Interpreting Services at Disasters, International Conference on Translation Studies in the New Millenium, published in the *Proceedings of the International Conference on Translation Studies in the New Millenium*. Oct. 16-18, 2002, Bilkent University, Ankara, 139-149.
- Bulut, A. & Kahraman, R. (2003). Voluntary Relief Interpreters as Agents of Intercultural Communication: Ethical Considerations. *10th Translation Targets Conference*. Sept. 11-13, 2003 Charles University, Prague.
- Bulut, A. (2011). Emergency and Disaster Interpreting in Turkey: From Past into Future. Paper presented at Bogazici University, *Symposium on Community Interpreting in Turkey*, March 5-7, 2011, Istanbul.
- Dogan, A., Bulut, A. & Kahraman, R. (2005). Voluntary Relief Interpreting: Social Responsibility and Beyond. Paper presented at University of Graz, *Translation Sociology Seminar*, May 11-13, 2005, Graz.
- Dogan, A. & Kahraman R. (2011 Fall). Emergency and Disaster Interpreting in Turkey: Ten Years of a Unique Experience. *Hacettepe University, Journal of Faculty of Letters*. Also can be retrieved from <http://www.edebiyatdergisi.hacettepe.edu.tr/eng> , 61-76.
- Dogan, A. (2006). "Afette Rehber Çevirmenlik: Toplum Çevirmenliğinde Yeni Bir Boyut [Guide Interpreters in Disasters : A New Dimension in Community Interpreting]", *New Horizons in Translation Studies*, Ankara: Bizim Buro, 359-376.