

Cognitive Linguistics and Interpreting in Police Interviews

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Interpreters in police contexts face different challenges in their interpreting choices. Time pressure, memory skills and note-taking are part of general interpreting skills that may result in additions, omissions and changes of meaning (Hale 2007). In addition to these well known difficulties, cross-linguistic differences can also hinder the translation process and Cognitive Linguistics can help to identify the language contrast that are challenging for interpreters. In particular, semantic typology has been studied in relation to translation (see Slobin 1996, Filipović 2007, 2017a, 2017b, Rojo and Cifuentes-Férez 2017). Applied Language Typology, i.e. the use of the effects that typological contrasts have in professional contexts has been specifically used in relation to forensic contexts and interpreting (Filipović 2017a, 2017b, Author 2018).

This paper focuses on the analysis of Spanish-English bilingual police interviews in California (USA). The normal procedure in California is that a control interpreter transcribes the police interpreter-mediated interviews and adds her own interpreting version to the transcript. The analysis presented here is based on the cases in which the two interpreters give two different translations. The results show different types of inaccuracies in the interpretation, which can be grouped in relation to general interpreting skills (e.g. addition/omission of information, addition/omission of intensity, use of euphemisms) and to typological contrasts. The latter group of inaccuracies include non-agentive constructions (e.g. issues related to the translation of *se* constructions into English, e.g. *se me cayó* 'it happened to me that she fell', translated as *I dropped her* or as *she fell*), Manner of motion (e.g. addition or change of Manner information into English, such as *subir* 'ascend, go up' translated as 'run up') and modal verbs (e.g. issues related to the translation of *no querer* as 'didn't want' or 'didn't mean to'), among others. These language contrasts are difficult to overcome in the interpreting process and can lead to different connotations in the target language in relation to the intentionality, force dynamics, speed of movements, etc.

This research sheds light on the role of semantic typology in the interpreting process. It also emphasises how the study of Cognitive Linguistics can be relevant to interpreters working in the legal context and in other professional settings.

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