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Agnieszka Biernacka: *Interpreter-Mediated Interactions of the Courtroom. A Naturally Occurring Data Based Study*.
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The study of court interpreting around the world has been growing steadily for the last decade, with a considerable increase in the volume of papers focusing on real interactions published in the last few years. In this context, Agnieszka Biernacka's *Interpreter-Mediated Interactions of the Courtroom. A Naturally Occurring Data Based Study* clearly reflects current trends in court interpreting research: a sound theoretical framework combined with systematic empirical research based on the analysis of naturally occurring data. This is one of the main assets of the book: it benefits from the author's mastery of court interpreting and conversation analysis notions, which are then applied to an advanced, thorough and orderly analysis of authentic interactions. The author's broad experience in the field, as a practitioner, a researcher and a trainer, becomes patent throughout the book: in the choice of theories, in the explanation of the rationale and method for the study, and in the dimensions chosen for the analysis.

The book starts with a brief introduction, where the general structure is described, as well as the research questions and the objectives of the study. Afterwards, it is divided into two clearly distinctive parts: part I, where the theoretical background is exposed, and part II, where the empirical study is presented.

Part I comprises two chapters. Chapter 1, "Court interpreting: a contextualization", introduces court interpreting as a practice and as a research field. It contextualises court interpreting in the broader domain of community interpreting—and as a distinctive field in certain research traditions—, it provides a historical overview of the practice, it reviews deontological codes and, finally,

it includes the Polish perspective in terms of legislation, codes, professional associations and training. This last section, the Polish perspective, is especially detailed, and this becomes very interesting not only for Polish readers, but also from an international perspective: it might be very useful for comparative studies of the evolution and professionalization of court interpreting across different countries. Overall, this chapter provides an excellent introduction to the subject of the book, while also challenging some long-term undisputed aspects (e.g. accuracy or impartiality).

Chapter 2, “Interpreters as active participants in the communicative events: literature review”, is also based on the revision of previous studies; however, this chapter focuses on descriptions of court interpreting as interaction, which will be the basis for the analyses conducted in the second part of the book. More specifically, Biernacka bases on Garfinkel’s (1967) approach to spontaneous dialogue as a form of social action; Goffman’s (1967) descriptions of face-to-face interactions, and on the ideas of institutional talk as described by Atkinson and Drew (1979) and Atkinson (1982). The author is also especially interested in those previous studies that have reflected interpreter’s visibility and agency. In this chapter, I must praise the author’s ability to connect ideas and contrast theories around the topics chosen, which result in an extremely engaging discussion for the reader.

Chapter 3, “Methodology and preliminary constraints in the research into interpreter-mediated courtroom talks”, carefully describes the methodological approach adopted for the study. It is notably detailed in the explanation of every step followed: from obtaining the permits to access the data, to its collection, transcription, annotation and analysis. In this respect, the chapter is extremely useful for future researchers that may follow similar paths. In the third subsection, “Integrated research in interpreter-mediated court interactions”, the author explains her analytical approach: a two-phase analysis where the annotation of mechanisms in the interaction (gaps, overlaps, turn-taking) is then related to interpreters’ renditions (following Wadensjö’s [1998] classification). Perhaps the only thing the reader might miss is a reference to the software used for the analysis—if any special software was used—which would also increase the replicability of the study.

The following chapters expose the analysis and its main results. Chapter 4, “Interpreters as participants in the turn-taking system of courtroom talks”, and chapter 5, “Overlaps and gaps in the interpreter-mediated interactions”, present a strong correlation: while chapter 4 explores the mechanisms for turn-taking in the court hearings analysed, chapter 5 focuses on those instances where two participants (either primary participants or the interpreter) talk at

the same time and on those silences produced by any of them. Interestingly, as opposed to what happens in other court systems (e.g. Angermeyer 2015), Polish interpreters do not usually interrupt or overlap to interpret, but instead wait for their turn to be allocated by the judge (“interpreter selected as the next speaker”, in the author’s words) or by the sequence of the interaction (the interpreter self-selects when she feels it is the appropriate moment to do so). The graphs included at the conclusions of each of these chapters become very helpful to understand the communication flow in these exchanges.

In chapter 6, “Adjacency pairs as components of bilingual institutional talk”, the author shows her proficiency in the application of Conversation Analysis notions to the study of court interpreting interactions. By focusing on adjacency pairs, Biernacka analyses interpreters’ active participation using the ideas of “preferred vs. dispreferred actions” and “upgrades, same evaluations and downgrades”. Similarly, chapter 7, “Pre- and post-expansions in the interpreters’ renditions”, and chapter 8, “Insert expansions in communicative events”, also present a new, original perspective for the study of those pieces of information that are added by interpreters. Through this lens, switching from direct speech to reported speech is considered a “pre-expansion”, as are also conversational markers such as “so” or “yes” or the shift from a question to an affirmative sentence, to mention just some examples. In these chapters, the application of Conversation Analysis provides an alternative reference framework for the analysis and understanding of interpreters’ divergent renditions.

Chapter 9 deals with “Repairs as responses to problems in bilingual interactions”. The author first provides a detailed classification of the repairs identified in the corpus, mainly considering whether repairs are self-initiated or other-initiated, and whether they are self-repairs or other-repairs. By focusing on repairs, the author can also identify problems in conversation (interpreter-created problems and primary party-created problems). It must be noted that while repairs have attracted considerable attention in conference interpreting research, they are still a relatively unexplored aspect in court interpreting (with only few exceptions such as Zambrano-Paff 2011) —a fact that stresses the value of Biernacka’s contribution in this regard. Furthermore, the analysis of problems becomes very useful for interpreter training and education.

While each chapter has its own “conclusions”, chapter 10, “Discussion on the results and recommendations for further research”, provides an overall summary and discussion of the main results. Again, the author demonstrates a vast literature review which is here used to contextualise or stress her own results, as well as her mastery of Conversation Analysis theories and methods, which are brilliantly applied throughout the book.

All in all, the approach adopted in the book widens the scope of potential readers. The first part puts the emphasis on describing court interpreting and its previous research, thus becoming especially interesting for students, practitioners and early-stage researchers. Chapter 3 can be of great value for any person interested in conducting research either in court interpreting or using corpora of naturally occurring data. The second part (chapters 4-9) presents advanced research in court interpreting, bringing fresh ideas and approaches for researchers with previous experience in this field, and becoming of special interest for researchers working in the disciplines of Conversation Analysis or institutional talk. Biernacka's study has also a great potential for replication and for further research. In brief, *Interpreter-Mediated Interactions of the Courtroom* will certainly become an essential reference in the field of court interpreting.

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