

The effect of ideology on the production and perception of simultaneously interpreted political discourse

Keywords: Critical Discourse Studies, Interpreting Studies, ideology, right-wing populism, European Union

This PhD project attempts to synergize two disciplines: Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) with a focus on right-wing populism (RWP), and Interpreting Studies. Its aim is to investigate the influence of ideologically loaded interpretation on the listener's perception of the original speaker, as well as the influence of interpreters' own political views on their interpretations of ideologically loaded texts. It builds on initial CDS approaches to interpreting (e.g. Beaton-Thome 2007; 2013) by including experimental methods. As previous CDS studies of interpreting have analysed existing texts, this study could offer a different perspective on the influence of ideology on interpreting.

The traditional model of the interpreter as a clear conduit that should not distort the source message in any way (e.g. Kaufert et al. 2009: 238), remains pervasive in interpreter training and in the profession's meta-discourse. The reality, however, may diverge from this model. While working, interpreters are influenced by various interrelated contexts: the immediate textual context of the speech, the context of the communicative event, and the broader socio-cultural context (Diriker 2004: 13). These can be expected to influence the linguistic decisions made by interpreters (Beaton-Thome 2013: 394). The resulting interpretation is unlikely to be "neutral"; it will always be, more or less consciously, negotiated between the ideology behind the source text, the demands of the social context and the interpreter's own views. Therefore, interpreters should be seen not only as helping to communicate a message, but as actors who co-construct it. As such, interpreters may be expected to have an influence on the shape of political discourse. For instance, interpretation might play a role in the normalization of RWP discourse (Krzyżanowski and Ledin 2017).

The first step of my three-stage study involves critical analysis of authentic recordings of English- and Polish-speaking right-wing populist Members of the European Parliament, and of respective interpretations into Polish and English sourced from the Parliament's archives. This should reveal patterns of positive or negative bias in MEP's and interpreters' language use during debates of controversial topics. The results will lead to the construction of ideologically loaded stimuli for the experiments which follow: source texts and translations manipulated to emphasize positive or negative bias.

In the second stage of the study, participants will listen to recordings of the translated stimuli from stage one, simulated to sound like a simultaneous interpretation, after which they will be asked to assess the speakers' communicative intent, and fill out questionnaires on their own political views. The collected data will be analysed to examine the influence of interpretation bias on the perception of original speakers, and correlated with the participants' political views expressed in the post-experimental questionnaires.

In the final stage, experienced Polish-English interpreters will interpret recordings of the source texts composed in stage one, assess the speakers' communicative intent, and fill out questionnaires on their own political views. The interpretations will be recorded, transcribed, and analysed for positive and negative bias similarly to the procedure in stage one. The results will be correlated with the questionnaires on interpreters' political views.

Word count: 500

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