
LINGUISTIC STRATEGIES FOR SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION FROM PORTUGUESE INTO BRAZILIAN SIGN LANGUAGE: IMPLICATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

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Abstract:

This study presents an analysis of linguistic problem-solving strategies used by Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) interpreters during simultaneous interpretation from Portuguese in conference settings. Based on audiovisual recordings of interpretations and retrospective interviews with professional interpreters, the research identified, described, and discussed the strategies adopted in response to the linguistic and cognitive demands of the interpretive task. Grounded in Functionalist Translation Theory—particularly the ideas of Nord (1988)—and in the Effort Model proposed by Gile (1999) and later expanded by Pointurier-Pournin (2014), the analysis shows that omissions, additions, additions through redundancy (using two or more signs with the same meaning), substitutions, paraphrasing, expansions, and anticipations are commonly used strategies to cope with difficulties such as terminological density, high speech rate, unfamiliar technical vocabulary, and cognitive overload. Rather than being seen as failures, these strategies are understood as functional responses—when used consciously and ethically—to ensure continuity, coherence, and comprehensibility in the target language. The research also highlights that reactive and unplanned use of such strategies may compromise interpretation quality, leading to misunderstandings, informational gaps, and inconsistencies. It is concluded that interpreter training programs should include an in-depth focus on these problem-solving strategies, emphasizing their proactive, contextualized, and functional application, thus enabling interpreters to make more informed and effective decisions in response to various interpretive demands. This study therefore contributes to critical and reflective thinking about the use of strategies by interpreters, fostering a more conscious and qualified professional practice.

References

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FINGERSPELLING IN PORTUGUESE TO BRAZILIAN SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETING: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

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Fingerspelling is a productive lexical strategy in sign languages and is often used to represent names, technical terms, or low-frequency lexical items. Despite its frequency in communicative interactions, fingerspelling presents unique challenges in simultaneous intermodal interpreting, particularly when rendering signed content into spoken language in real time. This complexity arises from its visual density, the transitional movements between letters, and the varying motoric demands each handshape imposes. Additionally, fingerspelled items are typically less predictable, which increases cognitive load and affects comprehension and production during interpretation.