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Interpreting rapport

— Cross-linguistic challenges in police communication with victims

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Abstract
Rapport-building is considered to be one of the keys to successful investigative interviewing. Given the importance of rapport-building techniques, this study focuses on how rapport is linguistically conveyed in interpreter-mediated police interviews with victims of crime, bearing in mind that rapport-building is linguistically and culturally sensitive, which means that it is important to prepare individuals (police forces, but also other parties involved, such as police interpreters or social workers) to bridge the gap between different languages and cultures in legal proceedings and other sensitive communicative contexts. Using a discourse-pragmatic approach, the study analyses trainee interpreters' renditions of police rapport-building, focusing on the linguistic conveyance of rapport-building in training practice, in order to explore how these trainee interpreters deal with aspects of rapport-building into English and into Spanish in police interviews. The findings confirm that conveying rapport and rapport-relevant expressions is challenging, particularly in relation to pragmatic equivalence. These findings provide a better understanding of the factors that impact the outcome of the interpretation in the context of rapport-building conveyance, and have theoretical and practical implications for interpreting training.

Keywords
interpreter-mediated communication, rapport-building, investigative interviewing, cross-linguistic challenges, pragmatic equivalence

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1. Introduction

Investigative interviews are essential to the legal process. These are interviews conducted by police interviewers with suspects, witnesses or victims, with the aim of gathering legal evidence in an effective and efficient way (Oxburgh et al., 2016; Risan et al., 2016). In the case of interviewing victims of crime, rapport-building is considered to be the most relevant element in the person-to-person communication process (Newberry & Stubbs, 1990; Goodman-Delahunty & Howes, 2019). Research shows that developing rapport with the victim can reduce the anxiety derived from being interviewed, thereby facilitating access to the victim's cognitive resources (Fisher & Geiselman, 2010).

In addition to monolingual interviews, the growth of globalisation has led to an increase in the multicultural aspect of legal contexts (Dhami et al., 2017; Filipović, 2022). When the police interviewer and the interviewee do not share the same language, they rely on an interpreter to communicate successfully. However, in the case of rapport-building, previous research has shown that the expression of rapport varies between cultures and contexts, as there are differences concerning interactions across cultures or ethnicities (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2021: 990). Rapport is, therefore, linguistically and culturally bound, and can present linguistic challenges when conveyed in a different language.

The research presented in this paper aims to explore the challenges faced by trainee interpreters when conveying police rapport-building expressions in interpreter-mediated interviews with victims. Following Pounds (2019: 96), a discourse-pragmatic approach will be applied to two simulated interpreter-mediated scenarios, designed from ethnographic observations of police interviews and investigative training. The discourse-pragmatic approach will focus on two expressive dimensions of rapport-building: empathic communication and face. The rationale is that rapport-building in police interviews tends to use face-enhancing expressions to mitigate the potential face-threatening communication inherent in the nature of these interactions. Therefore, the study aims to investigate what are the cross-linguistic challenges faced by trainee interpreters in the context of rapport-building, and what are the implications for interpreting practice and investigative outcomes.

2. Interpreter-mediated interviews and investigative techniques

Since the introduction of the PEACE[1] model in 1992 (Milne & Bull, 1999), police forces in the UK and also across Europe, have incorporated investigative interviewing techniques based on high ethical principles. These techniques follow an information-gathering approach to interviewing suspects, witnesses and victims based on avoiding coercive questioning, building rapport and making the interviewee feel at ease (Walsh & Bull, 1999). In 2016, PEACE was recommended to the United Nations by the Special Rapporteur, Juan E. Méndez. This led to the publication of the Principles on Effective Interviewing for Investigations and Information-Gathering, also called the Méndez Principles, with the endorsement of the Association for the Prevention of Torture and the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (APT, 2021). The Méndez Principles include robust research in relation to how rapport is crucial to the success of investigative interviewing.

In response to this, there has been increasing investigation into the benefits of rapport in eliciting truthful information and conducting effective investigative interviews. For instance, Holmberg (2004) examined how victims of rape and aggravated assault behaved under different interviewing styles and found that a humanitarian (rapport-based) interviewing style led the victims to be more cooperative and elicit more information. Collins et al. (2002) also confirmed that in interviews where good rapport was established, witnesses provided more truthful information and were more cooperative. This was also the case in interviews with more open-ended questions and a solid component of rapport-building (Vallano & Schreiber Compo, 2011). Furthermore, Kieckhaeferet al. (2014) found that rapport-building techniques were beneficial for witness memory recall. Finally, Risan et al. (2016) worked with traumatised victims of crime and revealed that it was important for the interviewers to accommodate the emotional state of the victim in order to facilitate rapport and achieve the interview aims.

Investigative interviews are mediated by interpreters when the interviewer and the interviewee do not share a common language. In her study on the dynamics of police interviewer and interviewee interaction, Russell (2004: 116) explored how the assistance of an interpreter changed the dynamics of the interaction by creating a "triadic mixture of opposition, cooperation and shifting alignments". This has led to the use of the term "interpreter-mediated police interviews" to refer to this type of interaction in order to stress its complexity (Nakane, 2014; Gallai, 2017; Lee, 2017; Monteoliva-García, 2018). Communication through this type of interpreting is considered more challenging than in other interpreting settings, since "all parties involved are jointly responsible, to differing degrees, for its communicative success or failure" (Roy, 2000: 63). In addition, the

[1] The PEACE model is a model of interviewing that follows five stages: Planning and preparation, Engage and explain, Account, Closure and Evaluation (Milne & Bull, 1999). This model is endorsed by the UK College of Policing and has also been implemented in countries such as New Zealand and Australia.

outcomes of the police interview depend on how the interpreter coveys the utterances, which is still under research nowadays. Police interpreting may be also hindered due to the secrecy and confidentiality of police data, and the lack of collaboration between police practitioners and researchers (Mayfield & Krouglov, 2019).

In investigative interviewing, the form and style of the message are as important as the propositional content (Dueñas González et al., 1991; Filipović, 2013). However, a lack of awareness of interviewing techniques may lead interpreters to disregard non-content features such as fillers, hedges or polite markers. In addition, interpreting training tends to focus on conveying factual information, a characteristic that has emerged from interpreting training being based on conference interpreting training techniques, particularly in Europe (Gentile, 2017). Consequences of this have been explored with *ad-hoc* interpreters, whose performance can alter the degree of politeness and other nuances of a police question, and thus the interviewee's response (Goodman-Delahunty et al., 2015). For example, Berk-Seligson (2009) explained how interpreters modified the police question forms in an attempt to avoid witnesses' discomfort. The interpreter's lack of proficiency in interpreting may also create serious miscommunication problems, as researched by Lee and Hong (2021) in an interview interpreter-mediated between Korean and Russian, where the interpreter's incompetence played a significant role in the suspect's implication and subsequent conviction for murder. Issues can also arise with professional interpreters, as explored by Nakane (2011) in her study on silent pauses in interpreted police interviews with suspects. Her study revealed that by managing these pauses before and after the interviewee's utterances, the interpreters applied a degree of control over the questions, taking power away from the police interviewer and having the potential to give control of the interaction to the interviewee.

In the case of specific investigative interviewing techniques, Lai and Mulayim's (2014) study on interpreting verbal strategies used by police interviewers, revealed that interpreters may not be aware of these strategies, which can have significant consequences for the interview outcomes. The researchers provide an illustration with the rendering of *how come* questions instead of *why* questions, which are recommended by police guidelines when dealing with children and vulnerable interviewees, as they are less accusatory. The study found out that some interpreters would render *how come* as *why* in the target language despite having a linguistic equivalent of *how come*, due to unawareness (Lay & Mulayim, 2014: 316). Furthermore, in his study on investigative interviews with suspects, Gallai (2017) showed how pragmatic alterations of discourse markers such as *well* or *so* in the interpreting renditions can diminish the interviewing process by disempowering the interviewee, and having a negative impact on the aims of interviewing techniques.

Regarding interpreter-mediated police interviews and rapport, research has been conducted from a variety of perspectives, mostly in interviews with suspects. Some researchers have used post-interview questionnaires to measure perceptions of rapport. For instance, Powell and colleagues (2017) led a study using semi-structured interviews

on the interpreting process from the interviewers' perspective, focusing on the challenges of using interpreters in investigative interviews with child complainants of sexual abuse. Their study showed that interpreters struggled with the traumatic nature of these interviews and with understanding 'best practice' in interviewing children. Recommendations were made in relation to specialised interpreting training and a better understanding of the rapport-building phase of the interview. In another study conducted with FBI analysts and interpreters, Russano et al. (2014) reported that more direct training on how to build rapport would benefit the investigative process, including training on how building rapport may differ depending on culture and language.

Similarly, Goodman-Delahunty and Howes (2019) conducted structured interviews with experienced investigative interviewers about interpreter-assisted interviews with high-value targets (i.e. suspected terrorists). Their findings highlight challenges in relation to building rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee when no common language is shared, and suggest the adherence to professional codes of practice, i.e. interpreting without additions or omissions, as this would facilitate rapport development. Finally, in a study with simulated police interviews, Hale et al. (2018) studied the impact of trained interpreters and untrained bilinguals. In terms of rapport, specialised legal training made a significant difference in maintaining rapport features in the interpreted renditions.

All these studies illustrate that despite recent efforts and developments in police interpreting, research on investigative techniques, especially linguistic and cross-linguistic features of rapport-building, remains underdeveloped. The following section explains police rapport-building focusing on linguistic features in interpreting interactions and how relevant politeness and face features are pertinent to police rapport.

3. Rapport-building and face in interpreter-mediated interactions

As rapport is commonly seen as crucial in information gathering methods, it is important to provide a definition that applies to investigative interviewing. The theoretical construct of rapport proposed by Tickle-Degnen and Rosethal (1990) is often relied upon in the forensic field. This conceptualisation of rapport is constituted by three components: *Mutual attentiveness*, *Positivity* and *Coordination* between participants (Tickle-Degnen & Rosenthal 1990: 286), and the aim is "to find a balance between what we desire and what the other agrees to" (St-Yves, 2006: 91). Derived from this construct, in investigative interviews with victims, rapport can be defined as "a working relationship between operator and source, based on a mutually shared understanding of each other's goals and needs, which can lead to useful, actionable intelligence or information" (Kelly

et al., 2013: 169). This means that rapport involves mutual respect between the police interviewer and the victim. Later research on investigative interviews states that rapport is related to displaying empathy (Bull & Baker, 2020). This refers to the ability to understand the interviewee's perspective and acknowledge their emotions, and communicate that directly or indirectly to them (Oxburgh & Ost, 2011). From a linguistic perspective, understanding how rapport-building is linguistically expressed is key to the success of the interview. Therefore, the study of rapport-building needs to take into account linguistic theories that pertain to the study of politeness and face features.

The concept of face connects with Goffman's original notion, defined as "the positive social value a person efficiently claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (Goffman, 1967: 5). Related to this concept, facework is defined as "the action taken by a person to make whatever he is doing consistent with face" (Goffman, 1967: 12). Based on the Goffmanian concept of face, Brown and Levinson (1987) developed the Theory of Politeness, which suggests that competent adults have a face or a "pubic self-image" that they wish to claim for themselves. This public image has two intertwined aspects: *positive face* and *negative face*. The former refers to the desire of an individual of having a self-image recognised by others (a desire for approval from others), whereas *negative face* relates to the individual desire of freedom of action and no imposition from others (a desire of autonomy from others) (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 70–73). The acts that "by nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or the speaker" (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 60) are intrinsically face-threatening acts. For instance, in a police interview, a common request such as *Could you please repeat that name?*, may threaten the hearer's (the victim) negative face, whereas a disagreement or accusation such as *The CCTV camera gives us different information*, may threat the hearer's positive face. On the other hand, an apology or an admission of guilt may threaten the speaker (the victim)'s positive face, who may attempt to protect their negative face. In the case of an investigative interview, they may invoke their right to legal protection as in *I will only talk in front of my lawyer*.

As interactions between the police interviewer and the interviewee may be deemed intrinsically face-threatening (Pounds, 2019), interviewers tend to use politeness strategies, both positive and negative, aimed at redressing any potential threat. For instance, agreement or praise would be considered positive politeness strategies used to acknowledge the interviewee's positive face (as in *What you are saying is very helpful for the investigation*), whereas an apology would be a negative politeness strategy aimed at mitigating an intrusion into the hearer's freedom of action (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 79) (as in *Sorry for keeping you waiting*).

In terms of rapport-building with victims, police officers tend to use face-enhancing expressions to mitigate potential face-threatening communication (Pounds, 2019). For instance, they may show appreciation for the victim's contribution, as in *You have been very brave to come to us*; or they may acknowledge the victim's implied or stated feelings, using expressions such as *I appreciate that this is really quite daunting*, or *I cannot imagine*

how hard this must be for you, in response to the victim expressing their emotions or potential worry[2].

Relevant to police interpreting, research on interpreting in legal settings has also explored the complexities of facework in relation to the impact of an interpreter in the dynamics of legal interactions. To illustrate this impact, Wadensjö (1998) applies the Goffmanian notion of participation framework (Goffman, 1981) to the concept of *footing*, which is concerned with the role that speakers take in relation to the ongoing talk. Therefore, the interpreter may take the position of *animator* (not taking responsibility for the utterances and acting as a 'sounding box' for others), *author* (acting as the agent who utters what is said, but without owning it), or *principal* (assuming responsibility for what is said (Wadensjö, 1998: 88). These roles may show an alignment with or a dissociation from the speaker, for example, through the use of footing shifts, which relates to shifts in pronouns and address (Wadensjö, 1992: 117–125). For instance, third-person pronouns indicate dissociation from the speaker (Shlesinger, 1991), and first-person pronouns indicate alignment with the speaker (and the utterance) when interpreters change the first-person pronoun from singular (*I*) into plural (*we*) in the interpreting utterances (Harris, 1990). This shifts in footing can have implications in what is communicated and how, and shows how interpreters may impact on the outcomes of the interaction, by aligning or dissociating with the speaker, in the case of this study, the police interviewer, ultimately impacting on the rapport-building element of the interview.

In addition, research in the field of interpreting training indicates that interpreters usually focus on the propositional content of the utterances, ignoring relevant cross-linguistic differences in relation to how meaning is conveyed (Krouglov, 1999; Lai & Mulayim, 2014; Hale et al., 2020). For instance, in her study on pragmalinguistic challenges, Liu (2020) highlighted how trainee interpreters struggle to achieve accuracy when interpreting cross-examinations questions from English to Mandarin, particularly because the illocutionary force deviated from the original in the interpreting questions. This may be due to the fact that traditional interpreting training usually prescribes an invisible and neutral attitude towards interpreting (Nakane, 2009; Angelelli, 2004), considering interpreters as conduits "transparent, invisible, passive, neutral, and detached" (Mason & Ren, 2012: 235), and focusing on terminology and conveying the meaning of utterances, rather than on h*ow* utterances are expressed (Lai & Mulayim, 2014: 310). Therefore, interpreters and trainee interpreters are usually not aware of pragmatic differences across languages, and they may focus on semantic interpretation in the belief that this will maximise accuracy. Yet, this can be detrimental in interviews with victims, where acknowledging feelings and addressing the interlocutors' face is essential to rapport-building.

[2] See Pounds (2019) for a complete range of linguistic expressions of rapport in relation to politeness and face in interviews with suspects.

All of these face-related aspects are determined by the context of the interaction as much as they are culturally-dependant (Matsumoto, 1988; Spencer-Oatey, 2008; Arundale, 2006; Mapson, 2015). This means, on the one hand, that linguistic expressions of rapport-building in these interactions are conditioned by contextual factors, in this case specific participants (police officers and victims) and institutional aims (pursue of justice under specific legal requirements). On the other hand, in the case of interpreter-mediated interviews, interpreters are culturally-bounded, this may cause that they invertedly modify the face-related linguistic expressions used by the police officers to build rapport, and thus unconsciously affect the nature of the interaction.

To achieve accuracy in the rapport-building dimension, we need to look at linguistic differences in relation to face features and understand what are the cross-linguistic challenges that can impact the outcome of interpretation in the context of rapport-building conveyance. These cross-linguistic challenges need to be understood, not only in terms of "linguistic equivalence" but with "functional and pragmatic considerations" (Pöchhacker, 2016: 138). Therefore, the term *accuracy* in our study follows Hale's definition of an accurate interpretation:

> An accurate interpretation will attempt to render the meaning of the utterance at the discourse level, taking into account the pragmatic dimension of language, transferring the intention behind the utterance and attempting to produce a similar reaction in the listeners in response to such utterance, as the original would have. An accurate rendition will also take into account the lexical, grammatical and syntactic differences across the two languages, as well as the possible cross-cultural differences. (Hale, 2007: 42)

The linguistic analysis of our data assumes this pragmatic focus, where both the propositional content and the speakers' styles should be retained in the rapport conveyance.

4. Linguistic challenges in relation to interpreting rapport-building

Linguistic challenges arise from variation in the language systems, since language grammatical, semantic, syntactic and pragmatic patterns differ from each other. In legal interpreting, linguistic shifts[3] between languages can lead to inaccuracies in interpreting utterances (Hale, 2004; 2010). Several empirical studies have researched this type of challenges in legal contexts, particularly in relation to pragmatic differences across languages. This means that an utterance can be translated semantically correct, however, the translation account for meaning out of context. For instance, when inter-

[3] We follow empirical interpreting studies in the definition of translation shifts as changes that occur in the process of interpreting, related to any difference from the original text to the source text (Baker & Saldanha, 2009).

preting profanity in police interactions, the semantic English expletive *bloody* has no usage equivalent in Spanish. This would mean a challenge for the interpreter, who would need to find another Spanish word or expression which conveys an equivalent meaning in this specific usage context, and that could achieve the same potential effect on the hearer (Hale et al., 2020).

Challenges may also arise in relation to differences in face orientation styles (in this case between Spanish and British cultures). For instance, Spaniards place a strong emphasis on showing camaraderie and spontaneity, whereas British orientate towards the addressee, placing more emphasis on building consensus with the hearer, acknowledging and respecting speakers' autonomy and face-saving indirectness (Hernández-López, 2008: 60). This is expressed in a preference for direct expressions of communication in Spanish and indirect manners of communication in English, for instance, Spanish requests tend to be much more direct than English requests (De Pablos-Ortega, 2010).

Linguistic difficulties can also be observed when conveying specific face strategies. For instance, in a study on simulated interpreted interactions between parents and teachers, Vargas-Urpi (2019) studied politeness issues in Chinese-Catalan and Arabic-Catalan. This author described how interpreters omitted specific face strategies aimed at mitigating potential face-threatening acts, because they were unaware of these politeness strategies in interpersonal communication, which would ultimately affect rapport.

Although rapport-building has not been widely researched in legal interpreting, in the field of medical interpreting linguistic rapport features have been increasingly examined, since rapport-building and empathic communication are considered at the core of medical interactions (Angelelli, 2001; Bot, 2005). These studies have indicated how relationship building is only achieved when interpreters effectively render verbal and non-verbal cues, and how some of these cues may be culturally bound (Bernstein et al., 2002). For instance, Iglesias Fernández (2010) examined verbal and non-verbal concomitants of rapport in healthcare interpreting practice. Her findings described how interpreters would transform instances aimed at building rapport into directive or authoritative statements, which led to a negative impact on the patient-provider relation. In another study conducted with Masters students in interpreter-mediated medical consultations, Krystallidou et al. (2018) analysed trainee interpreters' renditions of empathic opportunities expressed by patients, and doctors' responses to them. The findings reveal that students' renditions contained shifts in meaning and/or intensity, which impacted one-third of the interactions in both the patients' empathic opportunities and the doctors' empathic responses. A similar study was conducted with professional interpreters on their effect on empathic communication in medical consultations (Krystallidou et al., 2019). The findings uncovered that, although professional interpreters made fewer errors, shifts still occurred in meaning and/or intensity when rendering empathic

opportunities. Similarly, Baraldi and Gavioli (2007) demonstrated that interpreters' failure in rendering support and appreciation in medical consultations may lead to a distance between medical practitioners and patients.

These studies note that interpreting challenges in relation to rapport are usually not related to the propositional meaning of the words used. Rather, it relates to maintaining not only the original propositional content but also the original intention and effect (Hale, 2004; Berk-Seligson, 1990; Krouglov, 1999; Liu, 2020). This is intrinsically related to the expression of rapport-building, where pragmatic aspects, such as polite markers, hedges, directness or indirectness, or word order, may be challenging for interpreters, who unconsciously focus on content rather than on form (Hijazo-Gascón, 2019). Since interpreters are not specifically trained to convey these linguistic subtleties, they may inadvertently interfere in police rapport by transferring discourse and pragmatic habits into interpreting renditions. The following section outlines the methodological aspects of the data analysis intended to examine interpreting renditions of police rapport-building, and the main challenges faced by trainee interpreters when interpreting rapport and rapport-relevant issues.

5. Methodology and data

This study focuses on how rapport and rapport-relevant expressions are conveyed in police interview scenarios with victims, particularly aimed at cross-linguistic challenges that impact the outcome of the interpretation. We focus, in particular, on cross-linguistic differences between English and Spanish, and between different patterns in language use in the two locales. Therefore, most of these differences are connected to pragmatic accuracy, since it will be observed that linguistic challenges are not related to the propositional meaning of the words but to the original intention and effect (Hale, 2004). In order to account for this, a discourse-pragmatic analysis of interpreting renditions is used. This takes into account changes that occur in the interpreting renditions, in relation to any difference from the original text to the source text (Baker & Saldanha, 2009). This includes deviations from the original police rapport and rapport-relevant expressions, with particular emphasis on changes in the pragmatic meaning of the original utterance resulting from omissions, additions or modifications in register, hedging, modality and/or police interviewing specific formulations (Vargas-Urpi, 2019; Monacelli, 2005; Mason & Stewart, 2001).

An interpreting training programme was chosen for the purpose of this research: the MA in Traducción Jurídica e Interpretación Policial (MA in Legal Translation and Interpreting) at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. The data collection took place during the assessment of the police interpreting module of the programme during the academic years 2019–20 and 2020–21. This module is part of a broader module on theoretical and

practical skills on legal interpreting with a workload of 9 ECTS credits[4]. The subject area of police interpreting devotes 8 contact hours (plus 13 hours of individual study work per contact hour) to the theory and practice of interpreting for the police, particularly in relation to discrimination and domestic violence.

Two scenarios were designed after identifying and analysing linguistic rapport and rapport-relevant features used by police officers in interviews with victims. In order to do this, ethnographic observations of investigative interviews were undertaken[5], as well as training on Communication Techniques in Investigative Interviewing[6]. This enabled the design of the scenarios with rapport-building relevant and real examples. The analysis focuses on two of the most relevant rapport-building categories[7], as they are the most common in police interviews with victims.

The first category includes face-enhancing expressions. These are expressions used by police officers to mitigate the potential face-threatening communication inherent to the nature of this type of interview. These expressions are classified depending on their objective within the interaction. For instance, one sub-category would include police expressions that attempt to maintain rapport by identifying and recognising the victim's feelings and responding to the victim's emotions or potential worry. An example of this would be the police utterance *I appreciate that this is really quite daunting* or *Please don't worry, we are here to help you*. Another sub-category would refer to expressions aimed at conveying appreciation for the victim's contribution to the interview and encouraging the victim to contribute and cooperate further. For example, the police expressions *You are doing very well* or *You have been very brave to come to us* would value the victim's testimony and recognise her contribution to the interview.

The second category includes face-saving expressions. These expressions are related to the recognition of imposition arised from subjecting the victim to the emotional effort of recounting and remembering adverse events. The most common are expressions-like *Please take your time*, where the police interviewer addresses the victim's negative face by encouraging her to continue talking while acknowledging the emotional effort that this entails. Police questions and requests are also considered in relation to the victim's negative face. In interviews with victims, it is common that police requests may appear in the form of questions that function as indirect requests. This fits the non-adversarial and cooperative nature of this type of interview and aims to make the victim feel at ease, despite the interaction still been tense and implying both mental effort and emotional distress (Dando et al., 2016). A question such as *Could you remember any of the words he*

[4] ECTS stands for European Credit Transfer System. One credit equates to 25-30 hours of training, so 9 ECTS would be equal to 225–270 hours of training.

[5] The researcher was granted a special permission by the Spanish Ministry of Justice to observe and take notes in ten investigative interviews. These interviews took place in a police constabulary during 2018. The name of the constabulary has been withheld due to confidentiality requirements.

[6] The researcher took part in 45-hour training course on Communication Techniques applied to European police interviews during 2018 at the School of Prevention and National Security (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona).

[7] A range of rapport and rapport-relevant building examples is included in the appendix.

said?, or a request like *The best thing to do as far as you are concerned will be to not stay in your house*, would be commonly used in interviews with victims.

The data for this study is elicited from a total of 23 Spanish trainee interpreters who were participating in the aforementioned interpreting training. This training uses both Spanish and English as the working languages of interpreting. All participants were native peninsular Spanish speakers and hold a certified C1 or C2 level in English, according to the CEFRL – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The trainees had just completed their module on police interpreting. The data is obtained from two interpreter-mediated scenarios used under assessment conditions. This was motivated by the fact that, under assessment conditions, trainee interpreters were under some pressure, which could be compared to the pressure felt in an authentic situation. The scenarios included rapport-building expressions extracted from the ethnographic observations and the training materials, and they were scripted in consultation with police interviewers and then piloted and reviewed by experts in police interpreting and interpreting training. In each of the scenarios, both the police officer and the victim were role-played by lecturers, and one trainee interpreter acted as a police interpreter and interpreted the whole scenario. In order to gain insight into the relation to direction of translation, both scenarios were based on a police interview with a victim. However, in the first scenario the police officer role-play was in Spanish and the victim in English, and in the second scenario the police officer was role-played in English and the victim was role-played in Spanish. The scenarios were based on a victim of domestic violence, which was one of the topics covered during the module, and it was also one of the most recurring topics noticed in the ethnographic observations with victims. All participants knew in advance the characteristics of the interpreter-mediated scenario. One participant at a time was assigned to interpret the scenario, and all were all video-recorded for quality purposes. For the purpose of this study, non-verbal cues were not included in the analysis, however, the visual cues and lip-reading observed in the video-recording were useful to disambiguate some inaudible words. Finally, all participants signed a consent form in accordance with the University Ethics Committee, to guarantee their right to anonymity and confidentiality.

In relation to transcription conventions, this study adopted a standardised verbatim (i.e. orthographic) transcription system. The use of verbatim transcription facilitated the comparison between the original utterances and the interpreted renditions (Hale et al., 2020; Arumí-Ribas, 2018; Berk-Seligson, 1990, 2009). Since the data analysis describes cross-linguistic aspects that impact the outcome of the interpretation, the analysis follows Wadensjö's terminology (1998: 107) and uses the term *original utterance* to refer to utterances voiced by primary speakers, in this case the lecturers role-playing the police officer, and *interpreting rendition* to refer to the rendition of the original utterance by the trainee interpreters. As the aim is to account for cross-linguistic challenges experienced by the participants when rendering into English or into Spanish, illustrations of a marked trend or an interesting insight in relation to rapport-building are described,

with special attention to renditions where either the propositional content or the pragmatic equivalence are modified. Therefore, the discourse-pragmatic approach (Pounds, 2019) allows a qualitative analysis to "describe and explore the dynamics of interpreters communicative behaviour" (Wadensjö, 1998: 81), which leads to describing and explaining how rapport features are rendered within the context of interpreting training. It must be highlighted that although the scenarios are simulated, the interpretation is still naturally occurring, and interaction will be interpreted "as if it were in an authentic situation" (Hale & Napier, 2013: 138). This follows other prominent studies in legal interpreting that have used simulated scenarios to uncover linguistic challenges (Hale et al., 2018; Lai & Mulayim, 2014; Liu, 2020; Liu & Hale, 2017; Hale & Gonzalez, 2017).

The next section presents the findings of the study and discusses the most relevant cross-linguistic challenges by examining interpreting renditions that deviate from the original police utterances and what are the implications of this in terms of rapport-building.

6. Results and discussion

The data analysis showed that most modifications in the interpreting renditions are linked to rapport-building related expressions that do not preserve pragmatic equivalence. This can be observed in relation to the following challenges:

6.1. Influence of L1 Spanish

The data illustrates that since trainee interpreters are native Spanish speakers, they tend to use repetition as an intensification device when interpreting into both English and Spanish, as can be observed in the following extracts:

Extract 1: Repetition into English

Original police utterance	**Interpreting rendition**
Ya veo (I see)	*I see, I see*

Extract 2: Repetition into Spanish

Original police utterance	**Interpreting rendition**
So I really appreciate your efforts to help us in this respect	*Así que agradezco de verdad que nos lo estés contando porque de verdad nos es de ayuda* (So I really appreciate that you're telling us this because it's really helpful for us)

In Extract 1, the trainee interpreter adds repetition when interpreting the rapport expression *Ya veo* (I see) into Spanish, resulting in an intensification in the interpreting rendition. This is also the case in Extract 2, where the repetition of *de verdad* (really) in the interpreting rendition emphasises the rapport expression, in this case the appreciate expression for the victim's contribution, which intensifies its meaning as opposed to the English original. In Spanish, repetition is a common intensification device used to increase the strength of the argument (Fuentes Rodríguez, 2020). In the case of rapport conveyance, it is interesting to observe that this is a devise used by trainee interpreters as an emphatic addition to the rapport expression. This is also common in other languages, such as Italian, where in medical contexts interpreters use repetition of expressions and even whole sentences when rendering from English into Italian to add emphasis to the utterance (Merlini & Favaron, 2003: 223).

In relation to police questions and requests, the data also shows an influence of the trainee interpreters' L1 Spanish. When interpreting into English, the participants tend to shift the original question or request into a more direct structure, as in the extract below:

Extract 3: More direct questioning

Original police utterance	**Interpreting rendition**
When would you say in your opinion it started to change?	¿Cuándo dices que empezó a cambiar? (When do you say it started to change?)

This modification makes the English original utterance more assertive in Spanish, which can be problematic for rapport. The original conditional *would* and the expression *in your opinion* make the question a polite choice that addresses negative face, since there is a threat of imposition in the question. This indirect way of formulation present in the original utterance offers more choice in the requirement to answer, which is lost in the more direct formulation displayed in interpreting utterance in Spanish.

It is interesting to observe, however, that despite a preference for more direct questions and requests into Spanish, trainee interpreters tend to add some form of mitigation or attenuation when originally there was none, particularly in the interpreting renditions of questions or requests that come after a *face-enhancing expression*, as in the Extract 4 below, where the police original request comes after the face-enhancing expression *Thank you, Irene, I can't imagine how hard this must be for you*:

Extract 4: Request attenuation

Original police utterance	**Interpreting rendition**
(…) but we need to ask a little bit more about the attacks	Pero necesitamos preguntarte más sobre el incidente (But we need to ask you more about the incident)

In this example, it can be observed that the trainee interpreter chooses a softer lexical term when conveying the original *attacks*. This means that the semantic intensity of the word *attacks* is mitigated in the interpreting rendition, as if the trainee interpreter was aware of the imposition and this could have triggered a compensatory reduction when translating it into Spanish. This example resonates with other studies in legal interpreting, where both trainee and professional interpreters pragmatically modified police and court questions and requests (Lee, 1999; Berk-Seligson, 1990, 2009; Krouglov, 1999; Mason & Stewart, 2001). The data analysis of our study aligns with other studies on politeness and interpreting, showing that interpreters tend to tone down the pragmatic force of utterances perceived as face-threatening (Magnifico & Defrancq, 2016). In this case, the mitigation of *attacks* caused by the *face-enhancing* expression, could be problematic since it reduces the seriousness of the offense suffered by the victim.

6.2. Influence of direction of translation: into L1 Spanish versus into L2 English

Since in the first scenario the police utterances were expressed in English, and in the second scenario they were expressed in Spanish, the data could gain insights in relation to direction of translation, since in scenario 1, the participants interpreted the police expressions into their L1 (Spanish), and in the second scenario the police renditions were into their L2 (English). The analysis illustrates how rapport seems to be influenced by interpreters using their L1 or L2 when conveying the interpreting renditions. This is examined in the renditions of rapport-building expressions into L2 English, where less accuracy was observed when rendering into L2 English, as opposed to rendering into L1 Spanish. This is illustrated in the following extract below, where the original rapport-building expression *Tranquila* in Spanish, is aimed at acknowledging implied or stated feelings expressed by the victim:

Extract 5: Direction of translation

Original police utterance	**Interpreting rendition**
Tranquila (It's ok)	Calm down

The word *Tranquila* could be translated as *calm* or *quiet* when acting as an adjective, and it could also express an imperative meaning (*be*) *relaxed* or *calm down*, as in (*estate*) *tranquila*. However, when used as an appellative, as in this police example, the most appropriate translation would be *it's ok*, with the aim of attempting to maintain rapport with the victim by identifying and recognising her feelings. As Hale (2001: 47) observes, the use of imperative forms are more frequent in Spanish than in English, which means

that it may be cognitively easier for L1 Spanish trainee interpreters to access the imperative form in their L2 English. However, the fact that the trainee interpreter conveys the adjectival meaning of the word in an imperative form modifies the pragmatic force of the expression, which loses its rapport meaning completely. This example aligns with other studies that have observed a higher level of accuracy when the direction of translation goes into interpreters' L1 (De Groot, 2011; De Bot, 2000).

6.3. Influence of interpreters' footing: Pronouns and affiliation

Another aspect that must be highlighted in relation to the conveyance of rapport-building is the challenges that arise in relation to the trainee interpreters' personal footing. It is interesting to observe how difficulties appear in relation to the rendition of first person pronouns (*we* and *I*), present in the original police utterances. In the context of police interviews, the interviewer uses both *I* and *we*. The first-person plural pronoun usually allows the police officer to display themselves as an institution and enables a shared responsibility in the expression of the utterance, which implies external support. On the other hand, the first-person singular pronoun allows the interviewer to express themselves as an individual speaker and to establish a closer relationship with the victim (Stewart, 2001).

Extract 6 describes how trainee interpreters tend to swap these pronouns when interpreted, regardless of whether the original utterance includes the first-person plural *we*, or the first-person singular *I*. In Extract 7, the opposite phenomenon occurs and *we* is rendered into *I*.

Extract 6: Interpreters' footing (*I* into *we*)

Original police utterance	**Interpreting rendition**
I'll ask the interpreter to interpret while you are speaking, if that's ok, so that I don't interrupt you	*Voy a pedir a la intérprete que interprete mientras usted habla para que no tengamos que interrumpirla* (I'm going to ask the interpreter to interpret while you are speaking so that we don't have to interrupt you)

Extract 7: Interpreters' footing (*we* into *I*)

Original police utterance	**Interpreting rendition**
Sabemos que esta situación no es fácil (We know this situation is not easy)	*I know this situation is not easy*

In the first example, when *I* is rendered as *we*, it seems that the trainee interpreter wants to include themselves in the utterance expressed by the police officer. This is particularly common in cases where the interviewer expresses their support to the victim,

and it has also been studied in medical interpreting, where interpreters included themselves in comments made by the doctor, by using *we* in the interpreting rendition instead of the original *I* (Merlini & Faravon, 2003: 225). In relation to face, *we* can be related to the trainee interpreter wanting to encourage pragmatic solidarity with the victim, by using an inclusive face orientation (Serrano, 2000: 210) and protecting the victim's positive face. In the second example, where *we* is rendered into *I*, trainee interpreters seem to act as *the principal* (Wadensjö, 1998: 88) by taking responsibility for the words that have been said. This personal footing seems to be aimed at building rapport with the victim from an individual and more personal perspective. By taking personal "ownership" of the words (Wadensjö, 2008: 189), the trainee interpreter increases their personal responsibility, which is more conductive to rapport-building, and therefore, they interfere in the police interviewer attempt to build rapport with the victim, which can be detrimental for the aim of the interview.

Considering Goffman's participation framework (1981), studies undertaken with professional interpreters uncover that shifts in pronouns seem to take the role of *animator* in an attempt to disassociate with the speaker. This was observed in Gallai's study on interpreter-mediated police interviews (2017: 183), where he describes an example of the police interpreter rendering *I* into *he* as a way to add distance with the police officer. Pöllabauer's research on asylum hearings (2007) aligns with this, by explaining how interpreters may change the pronoun footing in an attempt to protect their own positive face and distance themselves from the authorship of the face-threatening utterance (i.e. questions or offensive expressions). In contrast, in our study with trainee interpreters, personal footing is aimed at aligning with the victim, and in addition, police questions and requests are not face-threatening in nature. Therefore, the shift to other participant roles in the interpreting utterances seems to be less likely.

7. Conclusion

This research seeks to shed light on cross-linguistic challenges faced by trainee interpreters when rendering rapport-building in police interviews with victims. The findings reveal that challenges are related to cross-linguistic differences between languages, particularly in relation to the pragmatic component. It seems that on many occasions trainee interpreters do not capture the original intention behind the rapport-building expressions. As a result, the rapport-building element is lost in the interpreting rendition, which may hinder the likelihood of obtaining complete and reliable information from the victim. In addition, pronouns shifts in interpreters' footing describe an active participation of the trainee interpreter in the interaction, which can also be problematic in the rapport-building relation between the police interviewer and the victim. It seems

that lack of awareness of pragmatic equivalence interferes in the rendition of police rapport. This is in line with other police interpreting researchers (Gallai, 2017; Lui, 2020; Krouglov, 1999; Hale et al., 2020), and can be related to the fact that training courses in legal interpreting, particularly in police interpreting, emphasise more grammatical and semantic ability rather than pragmatic competence (Gallai, 2013: 287). This study advocates for additional interpreting training in relation to language in use, not only at the semantic level, but also at the pragmatic level, considering that linguistic rapport is tied to language in use, therefore cross-pragmatic accuracy would allow interpreters to convey the intention and effect of rapport-building expressions.

On the other hand, trainee interpreters should be aware of rapport-building techniques used by police interviewers and their importance in the context of interviewing victims. This indicates that cross-fertilisation between police and interpreting training can help to understand challenges in these settings and could benefit both police interviewers and interpreters, by preventing that interpreters interfere in the rapport-building dimension of police interviews with victims.

Although the study has identified and analysed a significant amount of cross-linguistic features in relation to rapport, there are some limitations to its scholarly contribution. Firstly, the data set was relatively small, which needs to be considered in terms of generalisability. Secondly, the research examined interpreter-mediated interviews with two types of vulnerable victims, and analysed face-relevant expressions emerging from these interviews. Other types of investigative interviews, for instance with suspects or witnesses, could elicit other expressions related to rapport. Furthermore, a comparative analysis between trainee and professional interpreters could provide a further understanding of how professional experience may influence the conveyance of rapport in cross-linguistic settings. Finally, the study only focused on verbal cues of rapport. An analysis of how rapport may or may not be appropriately achieved non-verbally could enhance the linguistic results and deserves further exploration.

Appendix

Face-enhancing expressions

Subcategory	**Example**
Active listening (i.e. paraphrasing)	*You said he started to insult you*
Checking the victim's understanding	*Is that correct?*
Acknowledging the victim's implied or stated feelings (empathy)	*Please don't worry, we are here to help you*
Appreciation for the victim's contribution	*You have been very brave to come to us*
Affiliation with the victim	*You are all right sitting there?*

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