

Co-constructing Dyadic Sequences in Healthcare Interpreting: a multimodal account

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on interpreting in healthcare settings, taking into account a corpus of medical encounters involving Italian doctors, Chinese patients and an Italian interpreter. In the data, the interpreter and the patients often interact dyadically in Chinese, thus excluding the doctors from active participation. The aim of the study is to investigate the way dyadic sequences are co-constructed by the interactants, in their both verbal and non-verbal dimension. The analysis concentrates on the final stage of the sequences, i.e. the translation from Chinese to Italian, in order to show that closing the dyadic sequence and initiating the translation is the result of a complex negotiation, involving all the participants who use several semiotic resources to perform their communicative actions. The methodology is based on conversation analysis, but also draws on research on multimodal communication.

KEYWORDS: conversation analysis, dyadic sequences, healthcare interpreting, multimodality.