Non-professional interpreting carried out by vets and veterinary staff for British pets’ owners in the South of Spain

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The aim of the study

- The study is devoted to non-professional interpreters belonging to the health profession (Vet clinics and human health sector)

- 1. To see the similarities and differences in the health and vet sector, regarding:
  - Psychological issues of interpreters
  - Language issues of interpreters
  - Three tests were carried out

- 2. To compare the situation to that of other countries in the same context and language combination
The interpreting context: British people in the Costa del Sol

- Spain is the most popular destination after Australia ("Lifestyle migration"- Krit, 2012)
- Málaga: 72, 852 (60%: 55-70)
- Why?: Gibraltar, after Southafrica, International state agents, cheaper.
- O’Reilly (2002): not interested in language and culture
- They need services: web: angloinfo
- Rescued battered animals (dogs, cats, donkeys and horses)
Who does the interpreting in the vet clinic? And what they interpret?

- English vets in English clinics: *Diva Dogs*
- The vets (between pet owners and agencies dealing with paperwork: entry requirements in the UK) and auxiliary staff (between pet owners and vets)
- Professional interpreters and other non-professional interpreters
- What?: Paper work + interactions
Similar to the health sector?

Difficult terminology and heartbreaking stories
The context although similar: differences: space and noise
Child health cases:
The study of psychological issues regarding interpreters in the health sector

VT: The cumulative exposure to traumatic testimony
80s: VT: SLI

90s: war refugees, asylum seekers in medical and court interpreting. After 2000
Psycology journals
Blogs: remedies
Literature on vicarious trauma and interpreting

- Harvey (2003): “interpreters are in danger of empathically drowning”
- Granger & Baker (2003): Traditional models of interpreting require the interpreter to be neutral, invisible: non feeling, non thinking
- Elaine Hsieb (2010): “it makes everybody in the room uncomfortable when a human being is acting like a computer”
Trauma suffered by pet owners

- Wrobel & Dye (2003); Meyers (2002); Coules (1985)
  “Frequently transcends the emotional attachment which we form for humans”
  “Disenfranchised grief” isolation
  Living alone
A test concerning the medical and vet sector and VT. TEST A

- Test A: VT
- 10 nurses hospital
- 8 veterinary staff from local vet clinics

**Results:** Both sectors expressed not to be really affected by the cases they worked with: “it is part of my job anyway”

(We had previously done a survey that interviewed 8 volunteer vet interpreters that showed signes of VT) (Indialog 2015)
Studying the language interpreting services provided by staff at hospitals. TEST B

- Medical schools: English not part of study programs offered
- Studied by Angeleli (2004) interpreting performed by hospital staff in addition to their regular work: omissions, additions and substitutions and condensation of what was said, that led to misdiagnosis
- In Spain, volunteer interpreters deal only with insurance issues often via the phone, doctors and nurses do the interpreting
- Other sectors (paramedics: out of hospital environments: emergency medical services): knowledge of little English may lead to problems (holiday and my wife)
- A TEST: TEST B:
  - 10 audio recordings, 8 nurses and 2 doctors from hospitals (doctors and nurses have spent some years in the UK. Only 5% return)
- Results:
  - 6 very efficient and 4 with difficulties: words used by patients and staff, use google translator, write numbers on paper, struggled to set a common ground of understanding
Studying the language interpreting services provided by staff at vet clinics. TEST C

- Veterinary studies: Córdoba: optional subject taught in English (B1): *Caring, feeding and training of dogs*. 3c. To acquire vocabulary
- Courses for veterinary auxiliary staff: no English taught
- A test: TEST C: use of language in interpreting sections.
- Video recordings of interactions in 8 vet clinics involving 12 people (vet staff) that did interpreting:

- **Results:**
- 2 subjects: communication was effective, clear and accurate: successful (had worked as “meat inspectors” in the UK-Evill & Jones). Only 5% return
- A thesis: *Assessing the Preparedness of the Veterinary Profession to Communicate with Limited English Proficient Spanish-Speaking Pet Owners* by Ruth Ellen Landau, Purdue University, Indiana. (Spanish-English)
Conclusion

If we compare with study presented in the USA: Writen to ask for language inclusion in veterinary degrees, important to control pets in society, risks for others. In USA also a call for more hispanic medical students. The best: bilingual staff.

Comparing human and animal health sector regarding interpreting provided: Differences and similarities noticed.
Main References


THANK YOU!

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