

Blended spaces in simultaneous interpreting: Signers' and gesturers' subjective representations of speakers' texts.

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In a study on visualization in simultaneous interpreting, interpreters' texts show blending of elements from the source speakers' texts (texts that the interpreters interpret into another language) with elements of the interpreters' conceptualizations of those texts, filtered through their own subjective experiences, which might differ significantly. This study analyzes interpreters' processing of textual information as forming blended spaces (Fauconnier and Turner 2002) from a complex of input spaces. Interesting here is that the interpreter is not just listening to the speaker and attempting to understand them, but is doing so because they have a meaning-dependent linguistic task to perform, that is, they must reconstruct the meaning they believe the speaker intends, and convey this in a different language to their audience. We contend that the interpreter's output in this task directly links to the blended mental spaces they construct.

This study seeks to elucidate the input spaces that lead to blended spaces, and thereby to the constructed meaning as expressed in the interpreter's target text. Schematically, the input spaces for the interpreter are 1) real space: the input signal is located here, as are the speaker's and interpreter's gesture/signing space, along with the recipients of the interpretation; 2) the speaker's linguistic expressions: what the speaker says (as a resource to constructing meaning, including multimodal expressions, linked to real space); 3) the conceptualization/construal of speaker meaning; 4) the interpreter's conceptualized past space: embodied interactions with past objects/people and past spaces; 5) the target linguistic expressions/representation: necessitates reconceptualizing the input text in terms of another language/culture; and 6) the intersubjective conceptualization of the target audience: assessment of the input text/target audience "fit". This schematic complex of input spaces is elaborated in this presentation with examples from the visualization study. We conclude that from this array of input spaces, the success of the interpretation depends in large part on the alignment of the interpreter's meaningful blended spaces to the input speaker's intended meaning.

This work draws on a larger study of spoken-to-spoken language interpreters (n=8) and spoken-to-signed language interpreters (n=6) working from two common spoken English language texts. Each interpreter's task was to interpret two source texts into their target language, immediately followed by a "Think Aloud Protocol" (TAP) where the interpreter talked about their visualization processes during the task, and how they determined meaning. Both the simultaneous interpretation task and the TAP were videorecorded.

Both the speakers' gestures and the interpreters' subsequent gestures are informative in how the interpreters construct meaning. In Example 1 below, the input spaces result in the blended metaphor UNFAMILIARITY IS DISTANCE, which attributes the interpreter's construal of the situation to speaker meaning, that is, the extreme distance of China/lack of familiarity, when in fact, this was not the case (see Janzen, Shaffer and Leeson, in press).

Results show that numerous blended spaces were created from multiple input spaces. At times, there was evident conceptual alignment between the source speaker's and the interpreter's text, informed by alignment between the speaker's and interpreter's gestures. However, at times the blends show non-alignment both in the gestures and conceptually.

Example 1: "My son moved all the way to China."

Input space	Source speaker	Interpreter
Speaker's linguistic expression (English) (2)	to China	
Interpreter's linguistic expression (ASL) (5)		CHINA
Real space (1)	Proximal central space, within the speaker's gaze Palm up open hand (2 hands)	High distal space, outside the interpreter's gaze Pointing gesture
Conceptualized past experience (4)	First-hand experience	Inexperience
Conceptualized speaker meaning (3)		Inexperience

References

- Fauconnier, Gilles & Mark Turner. 2002. *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities*. New York: Basic Books.
- Janzen, Terry, Barbara Shaffer & Lorraine Leeson. In press. What I know is here; what I don't know is somewhere else: Deixis and gesture spaces in American Sign Language and Irish Sign Language. In Terry Janzen & Barbara Shaffer (eds.), *Signed Language and Gesture Research in Cognitive Linguistics*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Mouton.