

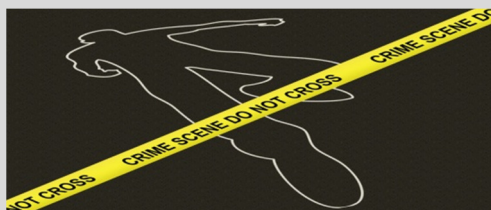
The Interpreter's Café

September 2011 Newsletter



Hello everyone. What a turnout and what a great group on Wednesday! Now that the meetings are taking place the 3rd Wednesday of every month we have more time to plan out attendance. Thnx. We discussed several terms including 1st degree murder: *homicidio calificado* and manslaughter: *homicidio culposo*. We also talked about the importance of requesting information ahead of time and/or having a preliminary dialogue with the LEP before the hearing. This provides context to the terms we interpret and avoid error. Some examples that came up were: *Nos encontramos en la tienda*. The word *encontramos* in Spanish doesn't necessarily imply intent. One could understand this as: 1) we met at the store; 2) I ran into him/her at the store.

Another phrase is *Salí corriendo* which as we all know could mean running away or simply being in a hurry. Then there's this one: *Estaba parado frente a mí*. If you're interpreting for a case where the LEP was involved in an accident, there's a big difference between a car being stopped or parked in front of another car, and a man standing in front of a car!
CONTINUED...



In our meeting we concluded that one of the oldest rules prevails: in order to avoid misinterpretation of ambiguous phrases the interpreter should take time to learn the facts which provide context. If the interpreter does not have time to do this, he/she could either use ambiguous phrases as well, and the attorney or judge will make follow-up questions to clarify, or the interpreter may ask for clarification during the interpretation. If choosing the latter, do not begin interpreting and then interrupt to ask for clarification. Listen to the LEP's response, ask the judge permission to clarify and then interpret the correct response in its entirety.

CONSECUTIVE STRATEGIES FROM THE PROS

Interpreters are amazing when it comes to pulling the correct words out of their brains within fractions of a second. But sometimes the word isn't recognized or retrieved immediately and the interpreter knows he/she will have to devote a few seconds to thinking. If you are listening to the LEP and this happens, say: "Your honor, the interpreter needs a minute," and take a deep breath. Sometimes all you need is a pause and when you relax the word comes to you quickly. If it doesn't, ask permission to obtain clarification of a term. These steps are not tremendously disruptive if interpreting in the consecutive mode and should be done before starting the interpretation. Make sure to write the term in your notebook so you don't have to ask for clarification again.

