

## Constructing Conversational Meaning: Analysing Side Remarks Within Ongoing Interpreter-Mediated Discourse

### Karşılıklı Konuşmada Anlam İnşası: Sözlü Çeviri Bağlamında Yan Yorumların Çözümlemesi

Araştırma Makalesi / Research Article

Burak ÖZSÖZ\*

\* Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Marmara Üniversitesi, Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bölümü, İstanbul, Türkiye, e-posta: [burak.ozsoz@marmara.edu.tr](mailto:burak.ozsoz@marmara.edu.tr), ORCID: 0000-0002-5706-3403

#### ABSTRACT

Drawing on a discourse analytical approach and Goffman's concept of *footing*, this study examines the role of *side remarks* in interpreter-mediated TV talk shows. While typically secondary to the main conversation, *side remarks* significantly influence interaction dynamics by shifting the focus toward entertainment and audience engagement. Using transcriptions from a corpus of publicly available video recordings of a Turkish talk show, the study specifically explores how shifts in *footing* facilitate the fluid negotiation of roles in creating a lively, participatory environment. The study has found that the host employs *side remarks* to cultivate a playful and informal atmosphere, often diverting attention from the primary dialogue. It has also revealed that interpreters align with the institutional party's goals in their strategic decisions to withhold the translation of *side remarks* intended exclusively for audience amusement. Furthermore, the analysis highlights the guests' awareness of the show's dynamic structure, demonstrating their ability to adapt to *side remarks* without disrupting the interaction flow.

**Keywords:** Discourse Analytical Approach, Footing, Side Remarks, Talk Show, Interpreting

#### ÖZET

Bu çalışma, söylem çözümlemesi yaklaşımı ve Goffman'ın *katılımcı konumlanması* kavramı çerçevesinde, çevirmen aracılı TV Talk Show'larında *yan yorumların* rolünü incelemektedir. Genellikle ana konuşmanın ikincil unsurları olarak görülen *yan yorumlar*, etkileşim dinamiklerini önemli ölçüde etkileyerek odak noktasını eğlenceye ve izleyici katılımına kaydırmaktadır. Çalışma, kamuya açık video kayıtlarından oluşan bir Türk Talk Show programının çevriyazılarına dayanarak, *katılımcı konumlanma* değişimlerinin canlı ve katılımcı bir ortam oluşturmak için rollerin esnek bir şekilde müzakere edilmesine nasıl olanak tanıdığını araştırmaktadır. Çalışmada, sunucunun *yan yorumları* eğlenceli ve samimi bir atmosfer yaratmak amacıyla kullandığı ve bu yorumlarla sıklıkla ana diyalogdan uzaklaştığı tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca, çevirmenin izleyiciyi eğlendirmeye yönelik *yan yorumları* çevirmeyerek kurumsal tarafın hedefleriyle uyumlu hareket ettiği ortaya konmuştur. Bunun yanı sıra, konukların programın devingen yapısına ilişkin farkındalıkları, *yan yorumlara* akışı bozmadan uyum sağlama becerilerine sahip olduklarını göstermektedir.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Söylem Odaklı Yaklaşım, Katılımcı Konumlanması, Yan Yorumlar, Talk Show, Sözlü Çeviri

## 1. Introduction

The interpreter's expected behaviour as a mere conduit in mediated settings aligns with Goffman's (1990) concept of a *non-person*—an individual present in the exchange yet typically refraining from active engagement in the primary interaction. However, this traditional perception of the interpreter has increasingly been reconsidered and redefined (Wadensjö, 1998; Roy, 2000; Napier, 2007; Krystallidou & Pype, 2018; Şener & Kınca, 2019). Side remarks or sequences—often not intended for all interlocutors within a communication environment—complicate the principles of fidelity and neutrality expected of interpreters, thereby further challenging the interpreter's role as a faithful conveyer of the speaker's meaning across languages. Known as ‘asides,’ these side remarks function similarly to *sotto voce* utterances, softened in tone or volume. Yet, how side remarks operate within interpreted talk shows remains largely unexplored. This study aims to investigate their role in these settings, where interactions unfold publicly but often contain layers of private exchange.

Adopting a discourse analytical approach, the study examines how interpreters handle side remarks in publicly broadcast TV talk shows, focusing on the extent to which interpreters render, modify, or omit these elements. It also provides insights into interpreters' decision-making processes regarding whether such utterances—an intricate aspect of discourse—are shaped by interactional demands or pre-established institutional roles. The concept of ‘footing’, originally proposed by Goffman (1981), refers to the shifts in how individuals position themselves or align with others during a conversation. This concept is relevant to the purpose of this study, as it highlights how a speaker making a side remark intended only for certain individuals (such as a specific group within a larger audience) subtly alters their stance or footing. Ultimately, this research seeks to deepen our understanding of the complexities involved in how interpreters treat side remarks during meaning-making within mediated public discourse, particularly in the context of TV talk shows.

## 2. Side Remarks

Side remarks, or *side sequences* (Jefferson, 1972), occur within the flow of an ongoing interaction but are not considered “directly part of the main activity” (p. 294). Instead, they represent brief departures that, while contextually relevant, are peripheral to the primary conversation. Often delivered in a casual tone and at a lower volume, like *sotto voce* (Pöchacker, 2016, p. 19) utterances, these side remarks are typically not meant to become the focus of the interaction. Instead, they serve various functions, such as expressing personal opinions, making indirect comments on related topics, or offering humorous observations. Functioning as secondary narratives within the main conversation, side remarks also play a strategic role in monolingual settings, especially when a speaker aims to avoid confrontation. Often directed at a selective, smaller audience, these remarks form part of a private discourse not intended for everyone physically present.

In interpreted interactions, side remarks may be directed solely at a nearby participant rather than all interlocutors. Since these remarks are not essential to the main dialogue's progression, they present challenges for interpreters, who must decide whether to render them.

This decision depends on factors such as the interpreter's role in the specific setting and the expectations of the intended audience. When handling side remarks, interpreters may use *selective omission*, deliberately deciding to leave out content they consider irrelevant to the main conversation. Another strategy interpreters use is *condensed rendering*, where they paraphrase a side remark to convey its essence without overwhelming the listener with unnecessary detail. Interpreters may even ignore an entire utterance due to a pre-negotiated role they are expected to fulfil in interpreted situations such as talk shows, where side remarks add a layer of complexity that impacts both communication dynamics and interpreter performance. These settings often demand that interpreters prioritize main content over asides, which, while pertinent to the context, can disrupt the flow of the primary dialogue. The next section, therefore, explores the unique features that characterize conversational dynamics in TV talk shows.

### **3. The Conversational Dynamics of Talk Shows**

Understanding the conversational dynamics of interpreted TV talk shows requires a thorough awareness of the linguistic and discursive features of talk show interactions. However, identifying distinctive features of talk shows is challenging due to the variety of types, each with distinct characteristics. Generally speaking, talk shows bring together, through the mediation of a host, experts, lay participants, a studio audience, television viewers, and occasionally callers as an additional audience (Ilie, 2006, p. 490). They are semi-institutional settings in which the conversational patterns of everyday talk are embedded. The participants engage in conversation with one another while simultaneously addressing the audience. The interaction is host-controlled, determining the participation format and topic shifts. However, as Straniero Sergio (1999) stated, this does not necessarily lead to a consequential development of the content (p. 307).

In the context of interpreted talk shows, the role of the interpreter becomes crucial in ensuring that these dynamics are maintained across languages, with interpreters actively mediating the conversation between the participants and the audience. The type of talk show examined in this study is an entertainment talk show, where the prioritization of entertainment takes precedence. As such, interpreters are not expected to merely render information but to contribute to the entertainment value of the show, with their role being "adapted to the entertainment mode of the interaction" (Wadensjö, 2008, p. 195). This ensures that the energy and engagement of the conversation are preserved across linguistic boundaries.

The audience's expectations are another crucial factor that influences the interpreter's rendition behaviour. Unlike the audiences of debate-based TV talk shows, where the exchange of opinions is central, viewers of entertainment programs, including the studio audience, tend to favour brevity and entertainment value over strict fidelity to source utterances. Thus, side remarks deemed irrelevant to the main communicative goals of the program should be treated accordingly, often being omitted or adapted to align with the entertainment-focused nature of the show. As Katan and Straniero Sergio (2003, p. 133) clearly illustrate, "an interpreted TV

programme must first and foremost be entertaining," meaning that it must please the audience and satisfy their expectations.

The entertainment ideology shapes the interaction in talk shows, with the primary goal of maintaining audience engagement through entertaining content rather than a strict topic agenda. Interpreters, therefore, must adapt to this dynamic structure, constantly switching between their professional role as translators and their communicative role as ratified interlocutors, ensuring constant verbal interaction, which Linell (1998, p. 242) has defined as "obligatory talk," and aligning their renditions with the show's entertainment-driven focus. Pignataro (2012) suggests that "the fun of talk arises as much from how things are said as from what is said" (p. 1290), highlighting that interpreters must also manage the delivery and tone of their renditions to maintain the engaging and entertaining atmosphere of the show.

#### 4. The Concept of Footing

The concept of footing (Goffman, 1981), employed as a theoretical lens in this study, refers to "the alignments that people take up to each other in face-to-face interaction" (p. 67). It captures how individuals position themselves in relation to others, with these alignments shaping the flow and meaning of communication. The term also encompasses the dynamic shifts in a speaker's stance within conversation, as interlocutors modify their roles or address specific audiences. To illustrate how participants negotiate various identities and their participation framework in interaction, Goffman conceptualizes three distinct speaker roles: *animator*, *author*, and *principal* (p. 226). The *animator* is the person who physically speaks the words, like a "talking machine." The *author* is the individual who chooses the specific words and structures to express ideas, shaping what is communicated. The *principal* is the authority behind the message, whose beliefs or views are conveyed through the words spoken. These roles clarify the layered responsibilities speakers assume, establishing their footing and contributing to the complexity of communicative exchanges.

Goffman's model of footing has been valuable in interpreting studies (Wadensjö, 2008; Straniero Sergio, 1999, 2007, 2012; Englund Dimitrova, 2019) for understanding how interpreters adjust their roles or attitudes during interactions and modify their renditions according to their perception of these shifts. Wadensjö (2008) argues that in interpreter-mediated interactions, the way the primary participants perceive the interpreter's role is influenced by their understanding of their own and the other party's involvement in the interaction. In other words, the interpreter's position can shift depending on how the participants align themselves with each other (p. 198). This aligns with Goffman's concept of footing, as the way participants engage with one another impacts how the interpreter adjusts their role—whether as a neutral conveyor of speech (*animator*), a creator of meaning (*author*), or as a representative of the participants' views (*principal*). Straniero Sergio (1999) applies Goffman's model of footing to study interpreters in Italian talk shows. He finds that hosts sometimes directly address interpreters, even teasing them, which makes the interpreters feel compelled to speak for themselves. Instead of staying behind the scenes as usual, the interpreters engage openly, adjusting their roles and occasionally positioning themselves as the

principal, representing the views of the participants. This research shows how the interpreter's behaviour can shift based on the interaction dynamics and the roles established by the host. Edmund Dimitrova's (2019) research highlights how an interpreter's behaviour can shift based on their perceived role and the context of the interaction. In this case, the interpreter's actions challenge basic ethical principles by withholding certain content from both the guest and viewers, even when explicitly asked to interpret.

Selective treatment of side remarks by interpreters in TV talk shows—remarks that do not directly contribute to the primary interaction or entertainment value—can challenge their pre-established role as animators. By choosing to either alter or omit these side comments, interpreters signal a shift in their role, sometimes adopting a more authoritative stance as principals. This shift allows them to influence the communicative flow and align themselves with the content or tone of the conversation, rather than merely conveying the spoken words.

After examining the corpus and methodology in detail in the next section, the study presents extracts from entertaining TV talk shows to demonstrate how interpreters treat side remarks in relation to their conversational roles or footing.

## **5. Methodology and Corpus**

This study adopts a discourse analytical approach to examine side remarks within TV talk shows, where the primary aim is to entertain an audience both in-studio and at home. The selected data consists of segments of audio-visual recordings of interpreter-mediated talk shows, which demonstrate instances of side remarks and *sotto voce* utterances. These interactions are largely controlled by the host, with foreign guests brought in as needed. For certain guests, an interpreter is required to bridge the language barrier between the host and non-Turkish-speaking participants. While some interpreters in these instances are professionals, others are merely native English speakers with no formal training, leading to varied interpretation practices.

Due to the dynamic nature of the show, foreign guests are not consistently present throughout each episode, which introduces a degree of variability to the interactions. To capture this dynamism and the interplay of both verbal and nonverbal elements, interactions are carefully transcribed from the audio-visual recordings. Transcriptions focus on utterances that included side remarks, the interpreter's handling of these remarks, and the subsequent sequences that provided context or response to these remarks.

Transcription conventions are adapted from Yılmaz's (2012) model, designed for analysing verbal and nonverbal features in Turkish-language discourse. This model enables the identification of tonal shifts, gestures, and other paralinguistic cues that could impact interpretation. Since the article is presented in English, any Turkish utterances within the transcripts have been back-translated and italicized to facilitate comprehension for non-Turkish-speaking readers.

Given the public availability of these recordings on digital platforms, no ethical clearance is sought. However, footnotes with video links have been provided for reference. This study is

structured as a case study, encompassing a limited number of interactions drawn from the same talk show to maintain coherence in discourse style, thematic content, and participant dynamics. Through this focused analysis, the study aims to uncover how interpreters navigate the complexities of side remarks within the context of mediated public discourse on Turkish television.

## 6. Analysis and Discussion: Mediating Side Remarks in Talk Shows

The data analysis focuses on identifying instances of role alignment and shifts in footing, with Goffman's (1981) framework guiding the exploration of how interpreters' treatment of side remarks influences the construction of meaning in mediated TV talk shows.

**Abbreviations:** (i) **H:** Host (ii) **I:** Interpreter (iii) **FG:** Foreign Guest (iv) **A:** Audience

### Extract 1<sup>1</sup>. (01.33-02.22)

**H1-** sevgili Frank ve Fionayı %alkışlarla% [applause from the audience] buraya (.) [orchestral  
*let's welcome our guests here with applause*

welcome music playing] [the host embracing the guests] [the interpreter enters]

**I1-**<hi [shakes hands with the guests]

**H2-**<eeev>et [laughing] [takes the interpreter's arm] ve %tabi% ki [points at the interpreter]

*okey now*

*and of course*

[applause and cheers from the audience] ### Frank [handing over the notecards] ## artık (.)

*it is*

[grab's the translator hair] artık (.) # \*artık\* zamanı geldi [covers her face with her hair] bırak

*it is now is the time*

*let go*

bırak [then spreads it to the sides and kisses her forehead]

*let go*

**I2-** aaa [shyly throws her hands over her face]

**H3-** [retrieves note cards] evet # Frank ve Fiona nasıllar bi(r) soralım hemen

*okey then let's find out how Frank and Fiona are*

In this instance of talk, the host welcomes two foreign guests of Irish origin through a warm, non-verbal gesture—a hug—rather than a traditional verbal greeting (H1). Following this, he takes the interpreter's arm, remarking “ve tabi ki” (“and of course”) as an informal introduction to the audience (H2), who are already familiar with her. Through his smile and warm demeanour, the host enhances the entertainment value, projecting a sense of informal intimacy with the interpreter. This portrayal extends her role beyond mere linguistic mediation,

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GHHCr3y0Y>



**I2-** e kuzen {evet}

*cousins yes*

**H5-** %kuzen kuzen% # evet bak şimdi yeni haberimiz oldu # Tuba Ünsalın kuzeni aynı

*cousins cousins                      yes well we've just learned the news she is Tuba Ünsal's cousin at*

zamanda # [turning to the guest] peki sen kimin kuzenisin (?) [in a mocking tone]

*the same time*

*and whose cousin are you*

**I3-** um (.)

**H6-** yok yok # sorma sorma

*no no don't ask don't ask*

The host initiates a conversation about the guests' recent appearance on television, asking the interpreter to relay it (H1). However, rather than following a straightforward question-and-answer structure, the host playfully interrupts, speaking in a child-like manner (“senin konuşmanı yerim”) to amuse the audience (H2). Recognizing the positive reaction, he exaggerates this playful tone, imitating the interpreter’s accent (H3), further amplifying the humorous effect. The audience responds with laughter and applause, reinforcing the host's alignment with their expectations for entertainment (A1-A2).

Following this interaction, the host shifts attention to the interpreter, asking her a personal question about her rumoured connection to Tuba Ünsal, a Turkish celebrity (H4). This turn initiates a schism, a sub-conversation during which the guests are completely excluded from the engagement framework and visibly seek to rejoin the dialogue through gaze patterns. By shifting the interpreter from her formal role as a mediator, the host positions her as both an entertainer and an active participant within the show’s social discourse, which is characterized by playful interactions and audience engagement. When he later turns to the guests and, using a mocking tone, asks, “peki sen kimin kuzenisin?” (“and whose cousin are you?”), he establishes a mutual gaze with the guest, yet the question is not meant to elicit information (H5). Instead, it is designed solely to entertain, adding an ironic layer that reinforces his alignment with the audience’s expectations. The interpreter, meanwhile, misinterprets the host’s illocutionary intent behind the last question, beginning to translate it as if it were a genuine inquiry intended for the guests (I3). The host quickly interrupts, saying, “sorma sorma” (“Don’t ask”), revealing that his remark was a side remark aimed solely at the audience, not requiring translation (H6). Here, the interpreter’s failure to recognize the host’s footing highlights her adherence to a literal, transactional role, in contrast to the host’s shift toward a relational footing.



**Extract 3<sup>3</sup>. (00.08-01.19)**

**H1-** merak edilen sorulardan bi(r) tanesi # eşi (.) eş yani (.) dünyada bi(r)çok kadın onu çok

*one of the most popular questions her wife I mean many women around the world*

beğeniyo(r) yani herkes onu çok beğeniyo(r) # %%% çok da şeker güzel bir kadınla evli

*admire him I mean everyone likes him he's married to a very sweet beautiful woman*

eşinde (.) eşi onu nasıl tavlamış (?) eşindeki fark ne (?) {dünyadaki bir çok kadına göre}

*how did his wife pick him up how is she different compared to most women in the world*

**I1-** well most women are really in love you # %what's% the thing that really attracted you {in your wife}(?) ## because we know that you've gotta very sweet loving wife

**FG1-** [smiles] yes um well she gave me no choice # <um

**I2-** bana başka şans tanımadı <diyo(r)

*she gave me no choice he says*

**FG2-** she slapped me on the shoulder looked me up <(…) said>

**I3-**

<omuzuma vurdu

*hit me on the shoulder*

**FG3-** give me your number before you leave and she left with a martini and I was like %ohh% so ahh it is just (.) # we were meant to be (...) the second day you are like oh no (!) no so it kind of screw from there and um # %when it is true love% it is true love and that's what they make movies about an write songs <about

**I4-**

<ay çok> şeker< [laughing]

*oh that's so sweet*

**H2-**

ne <dedi (?)

*what did he say*

**A1-**

<[laughing]

**H3-** arkadaş (!) # bizim tercüman kaydı ya {baya(ğ)ıa}

*our interpreter really got carried away*

The interpreter deviates from the strict role of translating the guest's utterances verbatim and instead aligns with the emotional tone of the guest's narrative. When the guest recounts the playful and affectionate nature of his romantic encounter, the interpreter interjects with the remark "ay çok şeker" (oh, that's so sweet) (I4). This spontaneous aside transcends the interpreter's institutional role, functioning as an empathetic response. Not explicitly addressed

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FO46H2l4ImM&t=79s>

to any particular participant, it operates as a general acknowledgment of the guest's sentiment, inviting shared emotional engagement and subtly involving the audience in the moment.

The host acknowledges the interpreter's aside, without directly engaging with the guest's story or the interpreter's rendition (H3). Instead, the host draws attention to the interpreter's moment of emotional engagement, humorously framing it for the audience. This shift in focus introduces another layer to the conversation, encouraging the audience to view the interaction through a playful lens. By doing so, the host emphasizes the performative nature of the talk show, where entertaining the audience takes priority over strict adherence to the traditional turn-taking structure. The guest's vivid narration of his encounter with his wife (G1-G2-G3), which invites the creation of side remarks by other interlocutors, reflects his alignment with the entertaining goals of the talk show. This storytelling approach highlights his awareness of the audience's expectations, as he crafts his narrative to engage and amuse, contributing to the interactive dynamics of the setting.

**Extract 4<sup>4</sup>. (00.30-01.13)**

**H1-** I have cats and dogs in my house [foreign talk] # %okey okey% what's your name (?)

**A1-** [laughing and cheering] [orchestral music playing] [all guests laughing]

**H2-** her zaman (.) her zaman (.) şunu söylerim # çalışınca oluyo(r) [audience laughing] # *hele always I always say this it pays off when you work especially*

bi(r) de başarılıysan # ve azimliysen # bu işin altından (.) %İngilizce ne% (!)

*if you are successful and determined you can handle it what in the world is English*

**A2-** [laughing and cheering] [orchestral music playing]

**H3-** evet # [brings the interpreter forward] eeeee evet [checks the note cards] hehe evet önce

*yes yes yes first of all*

öğrenelim neden bur(a)da ee rollersk (.) roller (.) %neden bur(a)da% (?) [with a falling tone]

*let's find out why he is here why is he here*

**A3-**[laughing]

**H4-** [interpreter intending to take the floor] \*bi(r) dak(i)ka\* (!)

*wait a minute*

The host attempts to pronounce the guest's profession (roller-skating) but stumbles, creating a humorous moment that elicits laughter and amusement from the audience (H3). His playful use of *foreign talk* (H1) and his exaggerated mispronunciation of the guest's profession function as performative acts aimed to engage the audience. Recognizing the audience's reaction, the host shifts his footing, moving from his authoritative role to a more self-

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOc7L2JCqSA&t=74s>

deprecating stance. His restatement of the question as a side remark (using a casual, conversational tone) further solidifies this alignment with the audience.

The host's side remark is intended for the audience and not for rendition by the interpreter. The interpreter skillfully recognizes this intention, refraining from translating the remark. This silence is significant—it demonstrates the interpreter's ability to read the host's communicative intentions and adapt accordingly, ensuring that the humorous moment remains localized to the intended audience without disrupting the interaction flow. These humorous asides allow the host to build a connection with the audience while maintaining control of the interaction.

**Extract 5<sup>5</sup>. (00.05-02.49)**

**H1-** ee Antonio hoş geldin kardeşim # Antonio seni tanıyalım {önce}

**FG(s)1-** [all laughing]

**H2-** seni tanıyalım çünkü (...) tanınmaya layık bir simasın {kardeşim}# ikinciyi mi

*let us get to know you because you're a character worthy of being recognised is it your second geliyo(r)sun çeviri yapmaya (?)*

*coming for translation*

**I1-** evet

*yes*

**H3-** ikinciyi geliyo(r)sun # normalde ne iş yapıyorsun \*çünkü\* çeviri yapamıyorsun (!) {belli}

*it is your second time what do you normally do because obviously you cannot translate*

**A1-** [laughing] [...]

**H4-** eee kırmızı üzerine kurulu {dizi} ve kırmızı dizide %hakim% bi(r)şey # gözü kırmızı #

*the series is based on red red prevails the series her eyes are red*

*elbise kırmızı # Skarlıtın anlamı kırmızı*

*the dress is red Scarlet means red*

**I2-** [whispering simultaneously]

**H5-** yazıyo(r) musun kardeşim kıza (...) kenardan (.) kenardan (.) ben ne anlatıyorum baba

*are you flirting with the girl bro subtly and quietly what am I saying the guy*

*or(a)da neu neu hey [imitating the interpreter's behaviour] onu sallama ben daha yakışıklıyım*

*there is like don't worry about him I'm more handsome*

**A2-** [laughing] [orchestral music playing]

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HoIJYFo\\_7PU&t=19s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HoIJYFo_7PU&t=19s)

**H6-** n(eya)apıyo(rsu)n abicim # n(eya)apıyo(rsu)n {Antonio} (?)

*what are you doing bro what are you doing Antonio*

**I3-** çeviriyorum [in a silent tone]

*just translating*

**H7-** koynumuzda anaconda beslemiştir # peki # [interpreter wiping his sweat] terledi ha (!)

*we've been nurturing a snake in our bosom all right then he sweat*

terledi terledi [the guest wiping the interpreter's sweat]

*he sweat he really did*

**A3-** ooooooooo (!) [let out a collective 'ooh']

**H8-** Antonyonun üzerine bugün biraz oynyalım {arkadaşlar} hep beraber

*let's altogether push Antonio a little today friends*

In this exchange, the host (H2) shifts his footing to a more informal tone as he engages directly with the interpreter. By making a sarcastic comment—“because obviously, you cannot translate”—the host's language indicates that this is not an actual critique of the interpreter's skills but rather a playful jab intended to entertain the audience (H3). This remark functions as a side comment, not directed at the guest or the interpreter in terms of conversation, but at the audience, creating a humorous moment that acknowledges the dynamism in the room. The remark about the interpreter's ability (or lack thereof) is an intentional side remark that the host frames as a joke for the audience's benefit, reinforcing his role as a central figure in controlling the interaction's tone. The interpreter, recognizing this as a side comment and not a direct question to be translated, refrains from rendering it, thereby respecting the host's intentions and maintaining the humour for the audience.

In the continuation of the exchange, the interpreter engages in *chuchotage*, simultaneously whispering translations into the guest's ear, a practice the host uses to his advantage for entertainment purposes. Aware of the interpreter's actions, the host asks in a playful tone whether the interpreter is flirting with the guest. Such asides to the main conversation are characteristic of the show's format, particularly when the host provides extended information about the guest. By directly involving the interpreter in this manner, the host not only shifts the focus of the conversation but also injects humour into the interaction, contributing to the lively atmosphere of the show and ensuring the audience remains engaged. The situation becomes even more entertaining when the guest assists the interpreter in wiping his sweat, prompting the audience to let out a collective “oooooh” in recognition of the flirtatious implication. The host capitalizes on this moment, inviting the audience to "push Antonio a little today," thereby reinforcing the interactive nature of the show. This invitation also solidifies the audience's role as an active participant in shaping the dynamic of the interaction, emphasizing the performative aspect of the talk show.

## 7. Implications and Conclusion

This case study highlights the significance of analysing side remarks as crucial elements that not only enhance the interaction's depth and engagement but also reshape the roles and dynamics of participants in interpreter-mediated TV talk shows. The shifts in footing observed in the analysis of various exchanges illustrate how institutional goals influence participant behaviour. While the guest is the central figure, the interpreter and the host leverage their roles to actively contribute to the interaction's entertainment value.

The host's verbal behaviour, particularly his use of side remarks, is a strategic deployment of Goffman's (1981) concept of footing, wherein he shifts his alignment from a formal, institutional role to a more casual, interactive one. By making sarcastic and humorous asides, the host not only engages the audience but also reaffirms his alignment with them, creating a shared understanding of the moment's comedic value. These side remarks are crafted to entertain the audience and maintain a lively atmosphere, which is essential in the semi-formal nature of the talk show. In this context, the host shifts footing between the roles of authority and entertainer, ensuring that the audience remains engaged while facilitating the conversation. This fluidity in footing reflects the dynamic structure of the talk show, where every participant has the flexibility to contribute to the interaction's tone and energy. Straniero Sergio (2012) stated that "by making strategic shifts in alignment, the host effectively determines the extent of the interpreter's involvement in the interaction" (p. 95). This observation aligns with the findings of the present study, where the host's manipulations of alignment play a key role in shaping the interpreter's participation and the overall dynamic of the interaction.

The role of interpreters in TV talk shows is significantly shaped by the concept of alignment, particularly when they face the decision of whether to translate the host's side remarks. Their decision not to intervene aligns with the host's comedic intentions, thereby preserving the humour intended for the audience. Interpreters generally recognize that these side remarks are not part of the formal dialogue but are instead employed to shift the footing of the conversation toward a more informal, entertaining tone. By refraining from translating these remarks, interpreters respect the alignment between the host and the audience, thereby preserving the integrity of the comedic moment without disruption. This highlights the interpreter's sensitivity to the social dynamics at play, where alignment with the host's entertainment goals takes precedence over traditional translation norms. This approach is consistent with Dal Fovo and Fablo's (2017) assertion that "dialogue interpreters on television engage in a multifaceted role, far beyond that of mere translators in the conventional sense" (p. 176).

The guests, through verbal and nonverbal behaviours, contribute to the flexible, interactive nature of the talk show by aligning with the conversational flow, even when side remarks are directed to their exclusion. They do not request translation for these remarks, understanding that such comments are meant to engage the audience and sustain the informal tone of the interaction. This awareness of the dynamic structure of the conversation enables a smooth and continuous exchange, with the focus remaining on the host's playful engagement with the audience and the interpreter. By refraining from interrupting the flow with requests for

clarification, the guests reinforce the overall dynamic of the interaction, emphasizing the notion that, in semi-formal talk shows, all participants—host, interpreter, and guest—must align with the primary goal of entertaining the audience. This illustrates how the concepts of footing and alignment shape the roles and interactions of participants in mediated settings, where the boundaries between formal and informal roles are fluid, and each participant plays a critical role in maintaining the show’s lively and engaging atmosphere.

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### EXPANDED SUMMARY

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This study investigates the treatment of side remarks, or 'asides,' in interpreter-mediated TV talk shows, focusing on how these utterances influence the dynamics of mediated public discourse. Drawing on Goffman's (1981) concept of footing and adopting a discourse analytical approach, the research examines interpreters' decisions to render, modify, or omit side remarks during interactions. The study highlights the complexities interpreters face in balancing fidelity to the speaker's utterances with the entertainment-oriented objectives of talk shows. It emphasizes the dynamic interplay between participants' roles, institutional goals, and the audience's expectations in shaping interpreter-mediated communication.

The introductory section situates the interpreter's role within Goffman's (1990) notion of a 'non-person,' a traditionally passive figure in communication. However, the evolving field of interpreting studies has challenged this view, recognizing interpreters as active participants who influence the interaction (Wadensjö, 1998; Roy, 2000). The focus on side remarks—often peripheral to the primary conversation—reveals how such utterances complicate the interpreter's role. Side remarks, akin to *sotto voce* utterances, are typically delivered in a softer tone and directed at a limited audience. Their interpretation or omission by interpreters requires careful consideration of interactional demands and institutional expectations. The study positions footing as a theoretical lens to explore how interpreters navigate these challenges, particularly in the unique context of TV talk shows.

Side remarks are conceptualized as brief departures from the main conversational activity. Jefferson's (1972) term 'side sequences' describes utterances that, while contextually relevant, remain peripheral to the primary interaction. These remarks serve various functions, such as expressing opinions, making humorous observations, or softening confrontation. In monolingual settings, side remarks often create private discourse within public interactions, offering strategic advantages for speakers. In interpreter-mediated interactions, these remarks add complexity, as interpreters must decide whether to render them. Strategies such as selective omission or condensed rendering allow interpreters to navigate these challenges, aligning their decisions with the communicative and institutional goals of the interaction.

The conversational dynamics of talk shows provide the contextual framework for this study. Talk shows are semi-institutional settings that blend conversational elements with structured, host-controlled interactions. They involve a diverse audience, including studio participants, television viewers, and occasionally external callers (Ilie, 2006). The type of talk show analyzed in this study prioritizes entertainment, requiring interpreters to adapt their roles to align with the show's goals. Unlike debate-oriented talk shows, entertainment programs emphasize brevity and engagement, often at the expense of strict fidelity to source utterances. This entertainment-driven focus shapes the interpreter's behavior, compelling them to manage not only the content but also the tone and delivery of their renditions.

The concept of footing is central to this study, providing a framework to analyze shifts in participant roles and alignments during interactions. Goffman (1981) identifies three speaker roles: animator, author, and principal. These roles clarify how individuals position themselves within a conversation, influencing their communicative responsibilities. In interpreter-mediated settings, footing shifts occur as interpreters adapt their roles in response to interactional demands. Research by Wadensjö (2008) and Straniero Sergio (1999) illustrates how interpreters often move beyond their expected role as neutral animators, occasionally assuming the positions of authors or principals to manage the interaction. In the context of TV talk shows, such shifts allow interpreters to align themselves with the entertainment-oriented objectives of the program.

The study examines audio-visual recordings of interpreter-mediated talk shows, focusing on segments featuring side remarks and *sotto voce* utterances. These interactions were transcribed using a model adapted from Yılmaz (2012), which captures both verbal and non-verbal elements. By examining these interactions, the study uncovers patterns in how interpreters navigate the challenges posed by side remarks, balancing their professional responsibilities with the entertainment-driven goals of the show.

The findings reveal that side remarks play a strategic role in shaping the interaction's dynamics. Hosts frequently use side remarks to engage the audience, employing sarcasm or humor to maintain a lively atmosphere. These remarks often reflect shifts in footing, as the host alternates between formal and casual alignments. Interpreters, in turn, must decide whether to render these remarks, considering their relevance to the audience and the program's goals. The analysis demonstrates that interpreters often employ selective omission or condensed rendering to prioritize the main content over peripheral utterances. These strategies reflect the interpreters' alignment with the institutional objectives of the talk show, emphasizing entertainment and audience engagement.

The study contributes to the understanding of interpreter-mediated communication by highlighting the complexities involved in rendering side remarks. It underlines the importance of institutional goals and audience expectations in shaping interpreters' decisions, demonstrating how these factors influence the treatment of peripheral utterances. The concept of footing provides a valuable framework for analyzing these dynamics, offering insights into how interpreters navigate their roles within the context of mediated public discourse.

Ultimately, the research emphasizes the significance of side remarks as elements that enhance the interaction's depth and engagement. By analyzing these utterances, the study sheds light on the intricate interplay between participant roles, institutional goals, and audience expectations in interpreter-mediated TV talk shows. The findings highlight the importance of understanding the nuanced decisions interpreters make in balancing fidelity, neutrality, and entertainment value, contributing to the broader discourse on interpreting studies and mediated communication.