

Abstract

Title: Interrogation of child witness as a criminalistic practical method

This thesis deals with a subject of child witness interrogation, emphasizing a specific techniques of child interrogation and their distinction compared to interrogation of an adult witness. The child witness interrogation process is analyzed from legal, criminology and forensic-psychological perspective. The thesis also identifies potential risks which interrogators might encounter during the questioning of child witness.

The objective of this thesis is to describe the issue of a child witness interrogation thoroughly and concurrently and to formulate an appropriate methodology to conduct such an interrogation. To achieve above mentioned objectives, practical examples showing potential weaknesses in the interrogation process of specific interrogators. The thesis draws from several foreign articles and studies dealing with issues of child witness interrogation and its potential pitfalls.

First chapter focuses on general findings concerning interrogation of a witness. There is a description of a current criminal law perspective which is supplemented by additional knowledge from criminology and forensic-psychology fields. Due to the nature of this thesis, most of the space is devoted to the criminalistic aspects of witness interrogation coupled with the tactics its procedures during the interrogation.

Second chapter tackles the actual interrogation of child witness. The child and his rights are explained there from both international and domestic law perspective. Subsequently, the thesis deals with the characteristics and peculiarities of a child witness, focusing mainly on the suggestibility of the child and the credibility of his statement.

The last chapter describes examples of a specific real-life child witness interrogation which were concluded in special interrogation rooms. The individual theoretical findings from the previous chapter of the thesis are then applied to individual cases. The child's testimony gathered from the interrogations is then put into the perspective of experts and their opinion focused mainly on the credibility and reliability of the child's testimony.

Key words: interrogation, child witness, child's suggestibility, testimony reliability