



THE CRUCIAL BALANCE IN SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION: LISTENING AND SPEAKING

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Abstract: *In today's developing society, the number of people translating in foreign languages is the majority. In particular, simultaneous interpreters too. Simultaneous translation is significantly more difficult than other types of translation, and can cause various difficulties for people engaged in this profession. This article provides information about the mistakes made in simultaneous translation and their solutions.*

Key words: *simultaneous interpretation, cognitive challenge, bilingualism, international conferences, political negotiations, courtrooms, chunk.*

Simultaneous interpretation is one of the most challenging tasks in the field of translation and interpretation. It requires interpreters to listen to a speaker and immediately convey the same message in another language, often with only a few seconds of delay. This delicate balance of listening and speaking, done simultaneously and in real-time, demands exceptional cognitive abilities, sharp linguistic skills, and intense concentration. In this article, we will explore the intricacies of this task, focusing on the critical components of listening and speaking.

1. **The Cognitive Challenge of Simultaneous Interpretation:** Simultaneous interpretation is not simply a matter of bilingualism; it is a highly specialized skill that involves complex mental processes. The interpreter must engage in three simultaneous activities: listening to the source language, mentally processing and understanding the message, and then translating and speaking it in the target language - all within a few seconds. This can be mentally taxing because the brain is required to perform multiple tasks at once, often under time pressure. The speed at which this has to occur can be overwhelming, which is why interpreters require extensive training and practice. Managing this load effectively is one of the most critical skills an interpreter can develop.

2. **Active Listening: The Foundation of Effective Interpretation:** Active listening is the foundation of successful simultaneous interpretation. It goes beyond merely hearing words; it involves paying close attention to the speaker's tone, emphasis, and emotional cues to grasp the deeper meaning behind the message. Interpreters must listen for context, idiomatic expressions, and cultural references that may not translate directly but are essential for conveying the speaker's intent.

3. **Speaking with Precision and Clarity:** Simultaneous interpreters must also be skilled speakers, capable of delivering the translated message in a clear, concise, and fluent manner. This is not merely a matter of translating words but involves restructuring sentences to fit the grammatical and syntactical norms of the target language. The interpreter must also maintain the speaker's tone, style, and register, ensuring



that the message is conveyed with the same level of formality or informality, seriousness or humor. Furthermore, interpreters must be mindful of the clarity of their speech. Since simultaneous interpretation is often used in high-stakes environments such as international conferences, political negotiations, or courtrooms, even a small mistake in translation can have significant consequences.

4. Techniques for Managing Cognitive Load: Given the cognitive demands of simultaneous interpretation, professional interpreters have developed several techniques to manage their mental load and maintain accuracy. One common technique is chunking, where the interpreter divides the speech into manageable parts, or "chunks," allowing them to process and translate smaller sections of the message at a time. By focusing on smaller portions, the interpreter can reduce the cognitive strain associated with trying to hold too much information in memory at once.

Another technique is shadowing, which involves repeating the speaker's words in the same language a few seconds behind. This practice helps interpreters improve their listening and speaking coordination and trains their brain to handle multiple streams of information simultaneously. Shadowing can be particularly useful for new interpreters as it helps them develop a rhythm and improves their capacity to manage time lag.

Anticipation is another critical skill in simultaneous interpretation. Interpreters learn to anticipate the direction of the speaker's message based on context, common phrases, or specific terms associated with the subject matter. By anticipating certain elements of the speech, interpreters can reduce the time they need to spend processing and translating, thus improving the overall flow of their interpretation.

Lastly, self-monitoring is essential. Interpreters must constantly evaluate their own performance, catching errors as they occur and correcting them on the fly. This can be especially challenging in a live setting, but with practice, interpreters become adept at quickly identifying mistakes and adjusting their output without losing the speaker's thread.

5. Context and Cultural Sensitivity: Beyond the mechanics of listening and speaking, simultaneous interpreters must have a deep understanding of the context and cultural background of the communication. Language is inherently tied to culture, and certain phrases or idioms in one language may not have a direct equivalent in another. It is the interpreter's job to find culturally appropriate translations that preserve the original meaning. For instance, a joke or metaphor that makes perfect sense in one culture may be confusing or even offensive in another. Furthermore, in politically or diplomatically sensitive situations, interpreters must be especially careful with their word choices. A poorly chosen word or misinterpreted phrase can have serious diplomatic consequences. Thus, interpreters often study the political or cultural background of the speakers and the topics being discussed to better prepare for potential pitfalls.

6. Conclusion: The Art of Balancing Listening and Speaking: The cognitive load involved in managing both tasks at once is immense, but with proper training, techniques like chunking, shadowing, and anticipation, as well as a strong cultural understanding, interpreters can deliver accurate and effective translations in real-time. By

mastering the art of listening and speaking simultaneously, interpreters serve as vital conduits for global dialogue, ensuring that language barriers do not stand in the way of mutual understanding and collaboration.

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