

PREPARING FOR AN INTERPRETING EVENT

Summary. The article deals with the problem of preparing for an interpreting event and contains certain practical advice to the experienced and inexperienced interpreters working in simultaneous and consecutive modes at international conferences. We suggest that the interpreters should use special drills to sharpen up their skills before the interpreting session.

Key words: an interpreting event, simultaneous mode, consecutive mode, special drills, interpretation, translation.

The role of an interpreter in the global world is becoming a key one. People are getting closer and more and more business people are establishing international companies where cross-cultural communication would be impossible without interpreters.

Here we agree with most Ukrainian, Russian and foreign scientists such as L. Chernovaty, V. Karaban, I. Korunets, S. Maksimov, G. Miram, G. Chernov, A. Chuzhakin, L. Visson, and other scientists researching into this field that translation is “inter-lingual and cross-cultural communication”.

Communication can be successful when people fully understand each other. Thus, only perfect knowledge of the source language (SL) and the target language (TL) as well as understanding into the subject field can make this communication successful.

Adequate interpretation can help people to establish new relations, start up new companies, solve some really important political issues and sometimes even prevent a war. Inadequate interpretation can ruin relationships and even cause a war if the parties fail to clear up the air.

Quality is really number one in the whole process of interpretation. Let us define these two notions “interpretation” and “quality”.

Following S.E. Maksimov we use the term “interpretation” referring to the product not to the process of interpreting activity. Interpretation is an oral translation that can be performed in simultaneous, consecutive and whispered modes [2, 21]. We share E. Alikina’s point of view [1, 28] that thinks that the term “interpretation” can be applied to all modes of translation where a message is conveyed orally in TL. Coming from the above – mentioned,

interpretation of a movie and off-hand or sight translation can be included into the list of interpretation modes.

Interpretation, thus, is a more narrow term compared to the term of “translation” but it is still translation and we think that the definition Chernov (1987) gives to the term “translation” is true regarding interpretation. He thinks, “Translation is a process of transforming speech messages in the source language into the speech messages in the target language under condition that their sense and communicative intention remain unchanged [2, 21]. As mentioned above using the term “interpretation” we refer to the product not to the process. Working definition of “interpretation” can be the following: “interpretation is the product obtained as a result of the process of transforming speech messages in the source language into the speech messages in the target language under condition that their sense and communicative intention remain unchanged”.

We think that the most important part of that definition is that the sense and communicative intention of SL messages should remain unchanged. Thus, the main criterion defining quality of interpretation should be the compliance of SL sense and communicative intention with the ones of the TL.

We believe that the second criterion can be evaluation of the way interpretation is presented. Speaking about these two criteria we can think of a parallel to the notion of a sign.

Each sign has two facets, they are contents and form. We can mentally sublime interpretation to a sign where contents are sense and communicative intention conveyed and form is presentation.

Resuming above written, interpretation can be considered successful, that is qualitative, if SL message and TL messages have identical sense and communicative intention and if its presentation in TL is fluent and listener friendly.

Quality criteria according to AIIC standards are given in the Annex to the practical course in interpreting by Maksimov [2, 403].

To meet these criteria an interpreter must be well trained as for his or her basic linguistic education and well prepared for an interpreting event.

Under an interpreting event we mean any conference, round table, meeting, tour guiding or

escorting where interpreting services are needed and used.

An interpreter cannot fill in any gaps in his or her basic linguistic training in a short period of time but one can surely be well prepared for an interpreting event regarding the knowledge of the subject field and the event background.

Certain recommendations exist as for essential preparation for an interpreting event where interpreting should be delivered in a simultaneous mode.

G. Miram and his co-authors [2007] speak about getting lists of the speakers, glossaries and if possible texts of the speeches at least several days before the event.

What shall an interpreter do in case neither glossaries nor texts are available? How can an interpreter be prepared for a round table or spontaneous meeting or an interview if you know only the subject field of discussion?

We will try to answer these questions giving some practical advice to the interpreters starting their career. It is possible that the steps given below may help even experienced interpreters to improve the quality of both message conveyance and presentation.

Such recommendations have never been put into the system of steps to follow disregarding the mode in which an interpreter has to work.

We suggest following a succession of actions that can preface a successful interpretation. These actions include a number of drills familiar to a practicing interpreter who has a proper training background in interpretation.

As some beginners may question of them we think it is relevant to specify what the notions are.

They are glossary, off-hand or sight translation (interpretation) and shadowing.

Glossary is “an alphabetical list of terms in a particular domain of knowledge with the definitions for those terms.”[5] It is absolutely necessary for an interpreter to be aware of the key words meaning used in the subject field he or she is going to work with during an interpreting event. It is also useful to compile a bilingual glossary that is “a list of terms in one language defined in a second language.” [5]

Off-hand or sight translation is the interpreting mode in which an “interpreter must render the source-language document to the target-language as if it were written in the target language.”[4] This interpreting mode can be used as a drill to check the subject field understanding and fluency in operating key subject words or terms.

Speech shadowing is “an experimental technique in which a person repeats speech immediately after hearing it (usually through earphones).”[6]

The Leningrad Group led by Ludmila Andreevna Chistovich first used speech shadowing as a research technique in the late '50s. Nowadays the best interpreter training educational institutions use this technique to train simultaneous mode of perception and rendering information. This technique can help in developing speech fluency in all working languages.

The stages of preparation for an interpreting event are the following if it is impossible to get all the necessary materials but the subject field is known :

Stage 1

1. Find information about the subject field in SL in the Internet or other sources. Read it aloud then render it in SL

2. Find information about the subject field in TL in the Internet or other sources. Read it aloud .Render it in TL

3. Compile the subject field glossary using the processed information mentioned above. It should not be longer than two pages.

Stage 2

4. Do the off-hand translation of the SL information into TL using your subject glossary.

5. Do the off-hand translation of the TL information into SL using your subject glossary

6. Assess the result and if you are not quite satisfied—do the points 4 and 5 again.

Stage 3

7. Find at least 30 min long YOU Tube videos upon the subject in SL and do their speech shadowing.

8. Render it in TL

9. Find at least 30 min long YOU tube videos upon the subject in TL and do their speech shadowing.

10. Render it in SL

Stage 4

11. Find another 30 min long YOU tube video in the subject field and interpret in the mode required for your interpreting event. If you have been booked for a simultaneous interpretation you have to interpret in a simultaneous mode. If a consecutive mode is required you should perform your interpreting in a consecutive mode.

We guarantee a good result if you follow these instructions.

Interpretation is one of the hardest and the most rewarding activities in whole translation field. Quality in this work is well appreciated and well paid. Let us strive for perfection.

References

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6. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speech_shadowing

Кузнецова А.В. Подготовка к переводческому событию. — Статья.

Аннотация. В статье рассматривается проблема подготовки переводчика в переводческом событии. Даются практические рекомендации как опытным, так и начинающим переводчикам, работающим в режиме синхронного и последовательного перевода. Предлагаются специальные упражнения, которые могут помочь переводчику подготовиться к работе.

Ключевые слова: переводческое событие, устный перевод, синхронный перевод, последовательный перевод, специальные упражнения.

Кузнецова А.В. Підготовка до перекладацької події. — Стаття.

Анотація. В статті розглядається проблема підготовки перекладача до перекладацької події. Даются практичні рекомендації щодо виконання спеціальних вправ, які можуть покращити виконання послідовного та синхронного перекладу під час події.

Ключеві слова: перекладацька подія, усний переклад, синхронний переклад, послідовний переклад, спеціальні вправи.