
Using Interpreting Strategies in Teaching Simultaneous Translation

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Annotation: This work is devoted to identifying the characteristics of translation strategies that are used by students of simultaneous translation in the pair of languages English-Russian. Translation strategies serve to solve translation problems and include methods, techniques, techniques used by a simultaneous interpreter. The first stage in the development of simultaneous translation skills and eight strategies are analyzed: trial and error, waiting, stalling, linearity, probabilistic forecasting, sign translation, compression and decompression.

Key words and phrases: simultaneous translation; translation strategies; probabilistic forecasting strategy; trial and error strategy; compression; decompression; linearity strategy; stalling; waiting strategy; sign translation strategy.

Simultaneous translation is a type of oral interpreting, which differs in that the speech in the target language is generated simultaneously (or almost simultaneously) with the perception of speech in the source language, which leads to a shortage of time. In other words, “synchronous is a combination of listening, instant comprehension of the text and clearly articulated translation” [8, p. 20].

The choice of a simultaneous interpretation strategy is mainly focused on the planning, goals and actions of the interpreter. According to one of the definitions, a strategy in simultaneous translation is “a method of performing a translation task, which consists in adequately transferring the communicative intention of the sender from the source language to the target language, taking into account the cultural and personal characteristics of the speaker, the basic level, language supercategory and subcategory” [2, p. 14].

The strategy is determined by both linguistic and non-linguistic factors, in addition, with simultaneous translation, it is possible to combine strategies to achieve the optimal result. According to another definition, translation strategies are the abilities (skills) of a simultaneous interpreter (in addition to language proficiency, the ability to speak and listen at the same time, as well as general knowledge), which require special training from him [14, p. 50].

Some translators prefer to talk about “techniques” of simultaneous translation [10, p. 72] or consider the “skills” of the simultaneous interpreter and the “techniques” used by him [1, p. 37]. However, “a set of means and techniques to achieve the intended goal” is nothing more than tactics - an integral part of the strategy [5, p. 773]. This is what makes it possible to consider various studies on the theory and practice of simultaneous translation in the prism of translation strategies.

In this work, we will rely on the classification of strategies proposed by V. M. Ilyukhin, since

the description provided by him is quite complete and covers various aspects of how a simultaneous interpreter plans and carries out his activities. In total, V. M. Ilyukhin identifies 8 strategies: the strategy of trial and error, waiting, stalling, linearity, probabilistic forecasting (linguistic and extralinguistic), the strategy of sign translation, compression and decompression [2, p. 2].

The probabilistic forecasting strategy is based on one of the most important mechanisms of simultaneous translation and consists in forecasting, building hypotheses about what the speaker will say, and this forecasting occurs at different levels and is divided into two types: linguistic (syntactic) and extralinguistic. The first type is based on predicting the source of the continuation of the discourse, that is, on the fact that the translator knows set expressions, phrases and focuses on other linguistic aspects of the statement, such as conjunctions, particles, etc. The second type of probabilistic forecasting is based on extralinguistic data that a simultaneous interpreter has, or on separate cognitive components. Thus, the translator makes predictions based on his own knowledge of the subject and situation, following the logic of the speaker. Probabilistic forecasting is possible largely due to the redundancy of languages that is, due to the interconnectedness, interdependence, repetition of elements of the statement [7, p. 58-60].

Compression is carried out to compress the original message, to regulate the delay in simultaneous translation, and also for the sake of conciseness of the utterance. It is due to the factors and characteristics of the speaker's speech and is often used when the rate of speech is high. The simultaneous interpreter must carry out a kind of editorial work in order to ensure that the translation is concise and in order not to miss and translate the key thoughts of the speaker. For example, a translator can omit adverbs and adjectives, keeping nouns and verbs, omit qualifiers, conjunctions, interjections.

Compression can be performed at several semantic-structural levels. There is syntactic, syllabic, lexical and semantic compression. With syntactic compression, for example, the syntactic structure is simplified ("contracted"), with syllable compression, the number of syllables is reduced, the translator chooses shorter words. With lexical compression, in turn, the translator expresses an idea in fewer words or replaces words with abbreviations. In general, all types of compression are closely interrelated [6, p. 147-150].

It should be noted that Western scientists rather avoid the general term "compression", preferring to speak, for example, about "generalization" and "merging" (combining) phrases with the help of selective presentation of information [9, p. 156].

Decompression is the opposite of compression and can take the form of clarification, compensation, descriptive translation. It can be used for the grammatical correctness of the text (with differences in system of languages), to reveal the semantics of words, to clarify and clarify cultural and other realities. Decompression is possible at a relatively slow pace of the speaker's speech, when the interpreter has the opportunity to facilitate the perception of the message. At the same time, the addition of information that has an explanatory character compensates for the lack of knowledge among the recipients of the transfer [12, p. 156].

One of the characteristic shortcomings of simultaneous translation is pauses in speech. According to scientists, pauses in the translator's speech can be divided into two groups: syntactic (pauses that are made when enumerating, when moving to a new subordinate clause, and so on) and hesitation pauses (pauses that are associated with fluctuations in the process of speech production). Sometimes hesitation pauses can be "filled" with various sounds ("mm", "uh"), but even if they are "clean", the listener of the translation can clearly distinguish between a pause of at least 0.5 to 1 second. [6, p. 47].

Pauses and other awkwardness in translation are avoided by the stalling strategy, which some researchers refer to as perception strategies. With this strategy, the translator, relying on

lexical and syntactical textual features of the text, pronounces neutral phrases that do not carry new information, or deliberately slows down the pace of speech until the moment comes when the translator understands what the narrator is talking about [14, p. 42].

Stalling can solve the problems caused by structures where the main members come after the dependent ones, in particular, where the verb takes the last place: in this way the translator “buys time” and does not force the recipients of the translation to listen to his long and “embarrassing silence” [Ibidem, p. . fifty].

Stalling is also used when proper names unfamiliar to the translator sound in the speaker’s speech, complex numbers, terms, colloquial words and other elements that the interpreter is not able to translate in the conditions of simultaneous translation, since it takes too much time to find the equivalent and the interpreter risks falling behind the speaker [11, S. 70].

Also, if the translator does not know the exact equivalent, he can choose the translation option using a trial and error strategy. The trial and error strategy (substitution strategy) is that the driver, not being sure of the meaning of this or that word or phrase, makes an attempt to implement make a translation by choosing one of the most obvious translation options, and then, if this option turns out to be erroneous, the translator replaces it with the correct one [2, p. 17].

In this case, the translator's self-control is of critical importance as the ability to see errors, inaccuracies, etc. in the translation text. and eliminate them. It is noted that the ability to perform such operations and find the best translation option is subject to training [3, p. 159].

The waiting strategy is used when the interpreter does not understand the meaning of the translated speech. With the waiting strategy, the interpreter pauses a little and waits for additional information in order to understand what the speaker is talking about. When an interpreter waits for the end of a sentence to translate it and then listens to the next sentence, this "mini-consecutive interpreting" tactic is a fallacy. The translator should enter as soon as possible, but only when there is material for translation – some “unit of orientation” that can be translated, or when he can complete the sentence in the target language.

The linearity strategy is considered one of the main strategies in simultaneous translation: it is characterized by the fact that the simultaneous interpreter starts and finishes the translation almost simultaneously with the speaker. To achieve this goal, the translator preserves the order of the information and makes the translation coherent and logical by dividing segments, in particular, by dividing complex sentences into smaller ones changing [2, p. 42]. For example, complex sentences are divided into simple ones and other offer segments. The application of this strategy depends on the structure of speech, and in educational translations it can rarely be used due to the linearity of speech development.

The so-called “salami technique” described by some authors can also be attributed to the linearity strategy. It boils down to the fact that the translator tries to arrange the translation into short, simple sentences, breaking complex sentences in the speaker's speech into simple ones and connecting them appropriately. Such a technique is especially needed when translating from languages such as Russian or German, where complex sentence structures with coordinating and subordinating connections are observed [10, p. 93].

This strategy is associated with syntactic transformations, in particular, such a technique as “open sentence construction” should be indicated, when the translator is not sure about the further content of the original and seeks to make sentences in the target language as “open” as possible so that they make sense regardless of the development of thought speaker [11, S. 80].

The strategy of sign translation consists in the translation of words or phrases at the formal sign level. This strategy helps the translator to retrieve from memory the equivalents of words

and expressions used by the speaker, or to translate unknown words at the character level (tracing, phoneme translation). The translator looks for correspondences at the level of signs, without moving to the level of meaning. However, if the translator does not know the equivalent, the strategy of sign translation can help the translator avoid a hopeless situation.

Experienced translators strive to correlate their translation with the translation situation, they take into account that in addition to the lexical level (the level of signs) there is a pragmatic component and the context of the message. This often distinguishes them from students. Students of simultaneous translation often select lexical options that do not fit the context, focus on the formal-sign level, and do not track the connections in the discourse [13, p. 758].

This article also discusses the characteristics of translation strategies that are used by students in teaching simultaneous translation. Training simultaneous translations are of interest to analysis, since they make it possible to trace the development of translation strategies at different stages of learning. The material of the study was audio recordings of translations of speeches of public and political figures made by translators, students of the specialized translation master's program "Innovative translation technologies: English", which is carried out in philology.

Faculty of Physics, St. Petersburg State University. The material is delivered through reading the text by the speaker. At the same time, the translators had no idea about the subject matter of the text, since explanations provided in advance could significantly affect the results.

The first stage plays a decisive role in teaching simultaneous translation, as students master the basics of this type of translation; they test their abilities and identify the potential for further mastery of simultaneous translation.

The initial stage consists of a preparatory phase and a simultaneous translation phase. The preparatory phase involves the formed skill of consecutive translation (which was typical for all students) and the implementation of preliminary simultaneous translation exercises, such as "shadowing", simultaneous repetition of sounding speech, as well as pronunciation of a previously learned translation while listening to a text, prepared and partially prepared synchro (based on previously read and translated text), etc.

At this stage, the key task of translators is the development of psycho-physiological skills, the ability to simultaneously pronounce the translation and listen to the speaker, as well as control their own speech in the process of translation. This ability develops gradually, and at the initial stage, quite often there is a transition from simultaneous to consecutive translation, when students use the waiting strategy, pausing until the end of a sentence or phrase, and then translate without listening to the speaker during translation and, as a result, performing compression in the form of omission of text fragments. For example:

This drives up bills that someone has to pay, and as the bills grow, the cost shifts to employers, who shift them to patients, and in the end it seems everyone focuses more on the cost of medicines, not the value of health.

Translation: *Это приводит к росту счетов, которые кто-то должен оплачивать, и по мере увеличения счетов за медицинское обслуживание расходы ложатся на плечи работодателей, которые, в свою очередь, перекадывают их на пациентов, и, в конечном счете, кажется, что все обеспокоены проблемой стоимости медицинского обслуживания, а не проблемой здоровья пациентов.*

Student's translation: (Pause) Законы, что кто-то должен платить. Стоимость растёт, которые призывают их к терпению, и в конце кажется, что каждый сосредотачивается больше на стоимости лекарств, а не на качестве медицинской помощи.

Compression, as you can see from the example, often leads to inconsistencies in translation,

which students cannot always track. In addition, the underdevelopment of the skill of simultaneous listening and speaking leads to the inability to continuously perceive the material, which is fraught with failures in the strategy of sign translation. In Example 1, bills is translated as laws while the speaker is talking about bills, patients is translated as patience, although the speaker is referring to patients. At the initial stage, translators are not yet sufficiently oriented in the source material, up to the complete disregard of the context: from the phrase bills that someone has to pay, the interpreter could confidently conclude that the lexeme bills means bills, not laws.

Often, a translator, using the strategies of expectation and compression, is unable to give an abstract translation after listening to text fragments:

Example (2): Because we have taken everything that has been thrown at us and we've said, «Okay, in order to get through this world, in order to be successful, I am going to throw my time in life right back at it. So I am going to read, I am going to study, I am going to get on the Internet. I am going to do all these things».

Translation: Из-за того, что мы взяли за все дела, которые на нас взвалили, мы говорим себе: «Окей, чтобы справиться со всем этим и быть успешным, я буду тратить свое время на это. Я буду читать, изучать этот вопрос, сидеть в Интернете, я выполню все порученное мне».

Students translation: (Pause) Потому что мы смирились с тем, что нам нужно сделать... прилагать все усилия, что... делать... всё, читать, сидеть в Интернете.

In this case, simple sentences are omitted, as well as parts of sentences (subject and partial predicate) and the last sentence. The translation sounds like a complex sentence of a fuzzy structure. No distortion was noted, but the losses led to inaccuracies. The compression strategy is the most frequent at the initial stage of the development of the simultaneous translation skill; however, due to the fact that students do not hear the whole speech, they allow distortions. In addition, at the first stage, simultaneous interpreters do not strive for speech economy, even when this is necessary for adequate translation.

Example (3): They say the whole business model for market-based healthcare is a case of oil and water that just

Don't mix – that the profit motive corrupts healthcare in general and the pharmaceutical industry in particular.

Translation: Говорят, что здравоохранение и рыночные отношения, как масло и вода, – вещи несовместимые. Стремление к прибыли негативно отражается на системе здравоохранения, в общем, и на фармацевтической промышленности, в частности.

Student's translation: Они говорят, что целая модель бизнеса для медицины, построенной на рыночной основе, – это случай масла и воды, которые просто не должны смешиваться, – коррумпированное здравоохранение в целом и фармацевтическая отрасль конкретно.

The translator apparently misheard four words and omitted them, which led to a violation of the meaning of the sentence. One of the reasons for this unfortunate case of compression was also that, at the beginning of a sentence, the interpreter uses phrases of market-based medicine and which simply should not be mixed up, resorting to decompression, instead of expressing these thoughts in fewer words and moving on to the next one. Part of the sentence that causes difficulty.

Due to the complexity of the psychophysiological tasks facing students at the initial stage of mastering the skill of simultaneous translation, the requirements for the quality of translation fade into the background; translations are evaluated less critically than at later stages. At the

first stage, it is difficult for students to maintain an optimal gap from the speaker and choose orientation units based on the characteristics of the text and relying on their own working memory. Most often, regardless of temporal factors, such as the pace of the speaker's speech and pauses in the speaker's speech, simultaneous interpreters at the initial stage maintain a rather long pause, not daring to enter or not understanding when to start translating and how to divide the information coming to them.

Example (4): *They (decisions) just start coming naturally and easily.*

Translation: *Решения начинают приниматься естественно и просто.*

Student's translation: *(Пауза до конца предложения) Они принимаются **более** просто.*

The translator translated only after hearing the sentence to the end, omitting the adverb naturally, thus applying compression and adding the comparative degree of the adverb in the translation, which can be attributed to decompression.

In case of uncertainty, the waiting strategy is often used. Beginning interpreters are given recommendations to complete the translation into complete sentences that do not contradict the meaning of the original sentence. To achieve this goal, students are often forced to use a waiting strategy, choosing for a long time the possible ending of a particular sentence.

Example (5): *Только что мне рассказывали о тех возможностях, льготах, которые они получили.*

Translation: *I have just been told about the possibilities, benefits that they have received.*

Student's translation: *I've just been told about the possibilities that they... have... got.*

In this case, the translator produced a "syntactically complete" sentence, making 2 pauses, during which he had the opportunity, resorting to compression, to still find a suitable semantic verb. In addition, there were failures of sign translation in the case of the privilege lexeme.

During sign translation at the initial stage, students demonstrate a low ability to find translation options and equivalents of words in the target language, if the words belong to a special vocabulary. This phenomenon is observed even when the lists of terms are given in advance (before simultaneous interpretation in the booths).

Example (6): *It's the story of what we call the «frailty drug».*

Translation: *Эта история о лекарстве от старости.*

Student's translation: *Это история о лекарстве от уязвимости.*

It was previously agreed that frailty drug should be translated as a cure for old age, but many translators could not find the correct equivalent in the list in time.

Thus, the first stage of developing the skill of simultaneous translation lays the foundation necessary for subsequent stages, and already at the initial stage, the use of all eight strategies is observed. The mechanism of simultaneous listening and speaking is still underdeveloped, as a result of which students often use waiting and compression strategies, moving to the level of consecutive translation. The waiting strategy is often a necessary measure in case of inability to distinguish units of orientation in the text and complete sentences. Undeveloped listening skills, as well as insufficient self-control during simultaneous translation lead to violations of the compression strategy, sign translation, trial and error. In addition, the sign translation strategy shows the students' insufficient ability to rely on working memory and switch the language code. Lack of confidence is often reflected in decompression and stalling strategies, which are nonetheless the most successful strategies in the first phase. Strategies for probabilistic forecasting and linearity are practically not found, and are often

characterized by failures.

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