

Different approaches and activities for learning simultaneous translation

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If modern simultaneous interpretation with microphones, headphones and recording equipment is a relatively new phenomenon, then the art of translation is as ancient as humanity itself. The activity of translators has been diverse since ancient times: they worked as missionaries, messengers, couriers and intermediaries in negotiations. Acting in all these roles, the translators translated the language of foreigners as well as their culture and politics. Everybody who speaks at least two languages knows that translation and especially simultaneous interpretation are very challenging tasks [Гончарик 2015: 3].

Simultaneous translation - is a mandatory attribute of all respectable international conferences and meetings. Therefore, in modern world simultaneous interpretation is firmly established in all international organizations and at numerous international forums.

The exercises described below will provide both the novice and the experienced interpreter with methods to improve skills in consecutive and simultaneous interpreting and in sight translation. Do these exercises in all your working languages.

Observe conversations conducted outside of earshot (e.g., across a room, with the volume turned down on the television or in a crowded area, such as a shopping center or an airport). Note how facial expressions, gestures, body movements, posture, and eye contact (or lack of it), reveal what the speakers may be saying.

Listen closely to someone you cannot see, such as a telephone caller or radio broadcaster, and analyze the person's manner of speaking: voice pitch, tone and volume as well as other sounds, such as sighs, hesitations, stutters and tongue clicking. Compare these differences among your working languages.

Go to a store with a friend (who will run a small cassette recorder) and ask the clerk about a product. Five minutes later try to repeat exactly what the clerk said. Play back the tape recording to see how accurately you recited the original message.

Analyze words and their meanings by asking others what they mean when they use a particular word or phrase.

Ask someone for directions to a place you know how to get to, then ask for directions to an unfamiliar place.

While listening to a speaker, try to determine the speaker's point early in the presentation. At the conclusion of the speech make another evaluation. Were your evaluations the same? Why or why not?

Evaluate how linking words including, "how," "why," "however," "but," "unless" and "therefore." Are used. How do they establish the relationships of ideas? Make a list of these words and analyze their usage. Do this in all your working languages [Fügen C. 2007]

Memorization techniques for consecutive interpreting

Your short-term memory capacity is normally limited to between five and nine bits of information (units of memory), and your ability to recall depends on how well you can organize what you have heard by finding patterns.

Have someone read a series of seven unrelated numbers to you. As soon as you are able to repeat the series accurately, try to repeat it backwards. To do this, you must be able to retain the series in your short-term memory.

Increase your analytical skills by reading a newspaper or magazine. After finishing each story, try to summarize what you read in a single sentence. Do this in all your working languages. Try this same exercise after listening to a news report or a radio or television talk show. Summarize the main idea in a single sentence.

Simultaneous interpreting skills exercises

· Have someone record passages from magazines or newspapers on tape, or record radio or television talk shows or interview programs (news broadcasts are not suitable for these exercises because the pace is too fast and the content is too dense).

· Once you feel comfortable talking and listening at the same time and are not leaving out too much, begin performing other tasks while shadowing. First, write the numerals 1 to 100 on a piece of paper as you repeat what the speaker says (make sure you are writing and speaking at the same time, not just writing during pauses). When you are able to do that, write the numerals in reverse order, from 100 to 1. Then write them counting by 5s, by 3s and so on. Note what happens whenever numbers are mentioned in the text you are shadowing.

· Begin writing out words while shadowing once you are able to do the above exercise with minimal errors. Begin with your name and address, written repeatedly. When writing this text, you should copy from a piece of paper placed in front of you. Do not try to write the passage from memory while shadowing the tape.

Write down the numbers and proper names you hear while shadowing the tape as in the previous exercises. Then play the tape back and check to see if you wrote them correctly.

Develop your ability to predict the outcome of a message based on your knowledge of the source language syntax and style and on your common sense and experience. Complete the following exercises with written passages from a magazine or newspaper:

This thesis presented the first available prototype of a simultaneous speech to speech translation system particularly suited for lectures, speeches and other talks. With the help of this thesis one should be able to improve skills of simultaneous translation.

Literature

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