A Study of C-E Conference Interpreting Strategies Based on the Effort Models

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Abstract: *As one of the symbolic occupation of the era of economic globalization, the appearance of conference interpretation was much earlier than others in history, which is enough to illustrate the significance of its existence. Interpretation has a profound artistic background, and all interpreters regards their translation as a work of art. The Effort Models (EMs) was proposed by Daniel Gile, an excellent professor regarding interpretation. The model is able to reasonably allocate the energy consumed in each part of the interpretation, and can also help interpreters find their own shortcomings and adjust and then correct them. The EMs and the principle of syntactic linearity help the interpreter avoid errors that occurred in interpreting.*

Keywords: *Effort Models; Conference interpretation; Syntactic Linearity*

1. Introduction

Conference interpretation, known as a high-level occupation in the field of interpretation, has be widely adopted as an indispensable part in conferences at home and abroad. To develop well, it is inevitable for our country to be connected with other countries around the world, and interpreters to be presented as a bridge between China and English-speaking country, which also offer great contributions to many different conferences. Consecutive interpretation and simultaneous interpretation (SI) are all concluded within, and the latter-SI will be discussed specifically in this paper. Simultaneous interpreting has been commonly regarded as a highly energy-consuming job, but for its various advantages like time-saving, high efficiency and convenience, it is very practical in international conferences. SI requires the interpreter to be organized and focused during the whole conference. Nevertheless, human being's energy and cognitive capability are restricted for an infinite amount of time, so allocating energy is of great significance. Under the Effort Models, interpreter's disposing capability of every part will be balanced and the errors of final interpretation will be reduced. On the basis of Effort Models, one of the most practical strategies that are applied to SI is syntactic linearity, which help the interpreter produce a smooth and coherent translation on-site. Under the models and in accordance with syntactic linearity, the quality of interpretation can be improved and more reasonable, and the interpreter's language capability is able to be improved as well as the knowledge reserve, namely overall quality.

In practice, consecutive interpretation is used in most conference interpretation to ensure the accuracy of translation with higher language quality standards. In the specific practice of primary interpretation, the junior interpreters, mainly English majors, will have some deviations and flaws in translation in different degrees and forms due to the lack of psychological training, language conversion skills and adaptability. By analyzing and summarizing the applicable techniques of C-E consecutive interpretation and the general principle of separability in simultaneous interpretation, aiming at further exploring the practical application of the principle of "syntactic linearity" in simultaneous interpretation in conference interpretation and consecutive interpretation and the related challenges. Under the guidance of "syntactic linearity", the source language information will be divided into independent thought groups by the interpreter, and the reasonable translation will be achieved through the proper treatment of cohesive words. Although most scholars do not think that the principle of syntactic linearity can be applied in other forms of interpretation as a principle of simultaneous interpretation, in fact, it still has a certain applicability in conference interpretation, and if properly used, it will have an outstanding effect. In practice, the stress of conference interpreters, such as the stress of language conversion and note-taking, will be released to some extent, but in some cases, it will pose a challenge to short-term memory. Especially for the student interpreters who are not very experienced in

translation practice and have broad space to improve their interpretation skills, the combination of interpretation methods and skills with the principle of sentence-driven is an effective method for both practice and training.

2. The Effort Models Theory

By introducing cognitive psychology and psycholinguistics into the study of interpretation, the theory-Effort Models (EMs) was then proposed by Daniel Gile in 1995. Those are very useful models that pay attention to interpreter's processing capability and energy allocation for each part during interpretation. Gile thinks that interpretation requires special brain "energy", and the supply of such mental resources is limited. At the same time, the process of interpreting consumes almost all the energy, sometimes in short supply, in which case the performance of interpreting will be greatly reduced. The process of interpretation production that based on the understanding of meaning in source language needs a huge amount of energy and the same is true in comprehension of sound. The energy of interpreter is conserved, that is to say, if the language production consumes attention overmuch, the listening comprehension would definitely miss some key information.

To help interpreters get all processing energy utilized, Gileconcluded the courses in SI: Listening and analysis Effort(L)[1], Short-term Memory(M), Production Effort(P) and Coordination Effort(C), namely:

$$SI=L+M+P+C \qquad (1)$$

The overall ability of SI is demanding and different efforts can be cooperated with each other to save interpreter's energy. Considering the immediacy in conference interpreting, errors within cannot be prevented completely. However, once the four efforts make the most of themselves, the errors in translation can be avoided to the extreme extent. The management of energy is of great importance in the process of interpreting, and it has been proved that practicing repeatedly is a useful way to make some processing capability become the "reflexes", which means that some sentences and words will be produced spontaneously into the target language. In this way the effort-loads are decreased and the interpreters feel less anxious in the meeting[2].

For the Effort Model of SI, featuring SI=L+M+P+C, the "L" refers the perception and understanding of voice, source text information. Listening practice is necessary in the whole process, understanding of the source text is the basis of interpretation. "M" stands for the short-term memory, and the more information preserved in brain, the more smoothly materials produced later. The process of production can be the most energy consuming part that requires the interpreter to speak in target language while listening to the source language, namely "P". Production load for the interpreter is heavy, and at that time, the listening comprehension and short-term memory before them will offer a lot to help relieve the pressure. As noted above, three Efforts should be well balanced in operations, which introduces the fourth Effort: "Coordination"-abbreviated as "C". The balanced capability in every part is the requirement of a mature and experienced interpreter. For the control of time need hundreds of operations in conferences and then the experience is accumulated[3]. Though the four parts of Effort Model, confusions and difficulties in the SI of conference interpreting are readily solved. When processing the source language, the total capacity requirements(TR) are consist of the capacity requirement for listening(LR), the capacity requirement for memory(MR), the capacity requirement for production(MR) and the capacity requirement for coordination(CR). The formula is TR=LR+MR+PR+CR. To accomplish the SI in conferences successfully, the following demand for SI should be met:

$$TR \leq TA \text{ (Total Ability)} \qquad (2)$$

$$LR \leq LA \text{ (Listening Ability)} \qquad (3)$$

$$MR \leq MA \text{ (Memory Ability)} \qquad (4)$$

$$PR \leq PA\text{(Production Ability)} \qquad (5)$$

$$CR \leq CA\text{(Coordination Ability)} \qquad (6)$$

Once one of the components above beyond the interpreter's ability, mistakes in the process ensue. Allocating each component reasonably can increase the efficiency and decrease the pressure loaded on the interpreter. In addition, the capacity of every part does not be distributed evenly in different situations. For example, in a C-E interpreting, a Chinese native speaker will not spend much energy in

understanding the source language (LR), but pays much attention on the production of English (PR). In short, the allocation of energy capacity depends on different situations of interpreters.

In the conference interpreting, occasionally the skill of SI can lengthen the ear-voice span for several seconds due to the speciality in some sentences, but the whole speed should not be much later than the source text that the interpreters heard during the meeting. Besides, cutting sentences, taking some simple motes or reconstructing sentences are useful skills to cope in SI, which will be illustrated specifically.

3. Difficulties in conference interpretation

3.1. Syntactic difference

3.1.1. Sentence order

Due to the diversity of language grammar between Chinese and English, the difficulties of conference interpretation arise. In this paper, interpretation excerpts of the international CEO Roundtable of China and Foreign Multinational Corporations are analyzed carefully. It shows that the speaker of the table is willing to say some conventional Chinese polite language which cannot be interpreted fluently in English if followed by the Chinese sentence order. The adverbials and modifiers or objects in Chinese are stated at the beginning of a sentence, but the English is inclined to put the verb firstly and then followed the object part and adverbials. As a result of the contrast, the information that the interpreter receives first may not be the key information in a sentence. Adjusting the sentence order in English is a tough task for an interpreter in several seconds after the source language was speak out.

3.1.2. Verbs in two languages

In Chinese, verbs can be put forward at the last part of a sentence, while in English, verbs are usually put just after the subject so that the sentence can be made idiomatically. Verbs in Chinese are very flexible and are not restricted in a common usage, but English sentences have their fixed syntactic rules except some special sentence like subordinate clauses and imperative sentences. All information will be made at the core of subject and predicate, featuring verbs. This is a point that the interpreter may be confused. On the other hand, the speed of the source language is also a factor towards interpreter's listening capacity.

In English, according to the rules of word formation, some verbs or adjectives can add suffixes to derive nouns with abstract meanings. Such nouns may be used alone or with prepositional or postpositional modifiers. This is the nominalization structure. The diversity of English nominalization is manifested in the fact that it can be collocated with premodifiers as well as postmodifiers. Not only that, but the modifiers in this structure come in many forms. The premodifiers of a noun may include adjectives, nouns, pronouns and articles, and may have their own logical subjects. The postmodifiers may be infinitive phrases, participial phrases, prepositional phrases and other forms. In addition, nouns derived from verbs or adjectives are often abstract and general in meaning, which requires simultaneous interpreters to be able to understand the exact meaning of the word in a short time and in the context. However, this kind of nominalization structure usually has more additional information, which naturally increases the difficulty for the interpreter to interpret smoothly in the limited time.

3.2. Numbers and other factors

Large numbers affect interpreter's short-term memory load a lot and once the memory ability goes beyond the interpreter's capacity, the production capacity will not be faring well. And the speed of interpretation is also interrupted by large numbers. In addition of some difficulties above, there are many other factors that influence interpretation. For instance, the speaker of the conference does not speak clearly, which leads to some misunderstanding of the meaning of the source language. And too may pauses in the source text make the interpretation fitful and thus the audience cannot have a comprehensive acquisition of the whole meeting. Different culture and customs are challenging for the interpreter, too. Those are occasions that the interpreter possess no idea to avoid but to strengthen their own processing capacity of the EMs.

4. Strategies towards conference interpretation

In order to reduce the requirement of processing ability for information understanding, the interpreter should accumulate relevant linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge, which can help the interpreter to identify the information and the speaker's thinking mode more effectively. Therefore, it is very important for interpreters to master some regular preparation strategies, such as browsing various media regularly and following the development of politics, economy, science and technology and culture. Of course, it is also important to master some specific preparation strategies, such as carefully reading the relevant documents after receiving the interpretation task. By the way, If the text of the speech is obtained in advance, the translator can adopt the following preparation strategies: dividing the sentence into shorter information fragments with slashes, which helps the interpreter to reorganize the information fragments; for some names and terms in the source text, the interpreter is able to find the corresponding equivalents in the target language in advance and mark them on the speech; for some compound names, the translator can make some marks on the speech to remind himself of the correct translation order. This helps reduce the pressure on the production load. Another strategy is to prepare a glossary: the preparation of a glossary itself improves the availability of vocabulary, and translators can use them to refresh their memories as needed during the meeting. To cope with difficulties that appear in simultaneous interpretation without materials in advance, observing the principle of syntactic linearity is a proper approach to solve tough questions flexibly.

4.1. The Principle of Syntactic Linearity

The "immediacy" of simultaneous interpretation determines that there is the difference between its interpreting mode and written translation. Chinese-English interpreters can read through the original Chinese text once or even several times to understand the meaning of the article. During reading, they have the chance to consult dictionaries, use Internet tools, and even ask for help and discuss with others. However, the "Off-site tools" that the simultaneous interpreter can use are very limited. Usually, what the interpreters can help themselves on the spot is nothing but the professional vocabulary prepared before interpretation, the speaker's manuscript which sometimes may not be available in advance at all, the speech outline like Power point and the assistance of his partner. In addition, the interpreter can adjust the tone as needed in the process of translation. It is not uncommon to translate a whole sentence in complete reverse order. However, simultaneous interpretation means that the interpreter's translation is almost synchronized with the speaker's speech. Chinese-English simultaneous interpreters need to translate the source language into the target language within 3-5 seconds after receiving the source language information, while continuing to receive the source language information. Continuous Chinese input, processing new information in the brain and preparing for subsequent English production can be described as a cyclic process. Such working characteristics require the simultaneous interpreter to adopt a completely different translation method from the consecutive translation. Because simultaneous interpreters cannot wait until they have heard a complete sentence to start interpreting, they need to provide the audience with the translation only when they hear "a few words", so it is impossible and unrealistic to adjust the word order of the sentence substantially. In general, interpreters should follow The Principle of Syntactic Linearity. That is to say, the interpreter divides the whole sentence into different information units according to the word order of the source language sentence, and then uses appropriate conjunctions to connect these units naturally and translate them into the target language. This principle helps the interpreter to keep up with the pace of the speaker, constantly throw out old information and process new information at the same time, minimize the short-term memory pressure of the interpreter, and balance the energy allocation of the interpreter in four aspects. In order to implement the principle of "syntactic linearity", the first step is "segmentation". A thought group refers to a phrase or clauses. Sentences can be seen as composed of sense groups, so thought groups are a unit often used in sentence segmentation. The closely related words in a sentence are combined to form a relatively complete whole of meaning, sometimes a phrase, sometimes a short sentence, which is a thought group.

4.1.1. Segmentation

To accomplish the skill of segmentation, thought groups in each sentences should be recognized by the interpreter naturally and swiftly. Segmentation according to the thought group can keep the interpreter's language production relatively complete and avoid misunderstanding of the meaning of the sentence, which is also observing another rule of translation, that is to convey the original meaning of the source language faithfully. However, in simultaneous interpretation of conference, the unit of sentence segmentation requires not only the relative independence of meaning, but also the moderate

length of meaning unit. This means that the syncopated utterance should fall within the listening range of the simultaneous interpreter. In simultaneous interpretation of long sentences, if the segmentation is not carried out in time, the target language will lag behind, and the excessive amount of information and the requirement of adjusting word order will increase the difficulty of the production ability, and it is difficult for the interpreter to produce idiomatic target language in a short time. The generative load on the brain of simultaneous interpreters will suddenly increase, which will affect the overall cognitive process and make it difficult to guarantee the quality of simultaneous interpretation. Therefore, sentence segmentation is a necessary skill for simultaneous interpreters.

The international CEO Roundtable of China and Foreign Multinational Corporations is a very successful conference that held in 2008. On the theme of "strengthen international cooperation and promote sustained develop", the conference attracted so many enterprises abroad. And the history of international CEO Roundtable continues today for its good influence around the world. Among it, the interpreter's role in convey meaning of spirit is significant.

Example 1:

ST: Zai ci, wo jin dai biao zhong guo shang wu bu dui hui yi de cheng gong ju ban biao shi re lie de huan ying.

TT: Hereby, on behalf of the Ministry of China, I would express towards the success of the meeting my warm congratulations.

Analysis: The sentence appeared at the beginning of the conference, and is a conventional greeting sentence. There are three thought groups in the source text and the sentence structure of target language is basically the same as that in the source language. Therefore, the interpreter can translate it on the basis of "Syntactic Linearity". It is noteworthy that the first word "me" followed by "nearby" should not be interpreted firstly, after several words of source language were acquired, the interpretation can be more reasonable in the listening and analysis effort when the interpreter can[4].

Example 2:

ST: Jing wai zhong zi qi ye ji ji can yu dang di she hui de ge Zhong gong yi he huan bao huo dong, qu de le shi shi zai zai de cheng xiao, wei cu jin suo zai guo she hui fa zhan zuo chu le gong xian, dui gou jian he xie shi jie, shi xian hu li gong ying qi dao le ji ji de tui dong zuo yong.

TT: Chinese companies abroad have been involved in various local activities for public interest and environmental protection yielding practical benefits as part of their contribution to local social development. It is also useful for building a harmonious world based on mutual benefit for all.

Analysis: In the source text, verbs like "qu de"，"cu jin"， "dui...qi zuo yong" have formed three parts of objects in one sentence, thus segmenting the sentence is not difficult for the interpreter. However, the adverbials ahead of predicate, a normal and idiomatic sentence in Chinese, will puzzle the interpreter. Then after the segmentation, the connection between those different objects is what the interpreter should consider. The gerund "yielding...as part of…" was chosen for the two thought groups "qu de le" and "wei...zuo gong xian". In this way the interpreter's production load was relieved. For the last part of the sentence, waiting for the verb is a good way as the former production capability is enough and the listening capability will not be influenced, so as to give a smooth interpretation[5].

The process of translation is the process of reorganizing and conveying the source language information into the target language. In the process of English-Chinese simultaneous interpretation, the primary task is to determine the thought group and information focus of English expression. Therefore, it is the first step for us to determine the appropriate form of thought groups and find relatively complete semantic components. Sentence segmentation is to divide a relatively complex language structure into independent units of meaning at the level of phrases and clauses. This unit of meaning usually refers to the meaning group. A thought group consists of words or phrases that have relatively independent meanings. The concept of independent meaning is within the scope of the interpreter's instantaneous understanding, which is the basic principle of proper sentence segmentation and meaning group segmentation[6].

4.1.2. Conversion and combination

In translation, Chinese emphasizes parataxis, and different meaning groups and elements in a sentence are closely related. In many cases, Chinese does not need to use conjunctions or prepositions, and its sentence form is relatively relaxed. In English, hypotaxis is emphasized, and the dissenting group or the combination of elements in a sentence must be realized with the help of conjunctions or

prepositions. It is also true that the English form is much more rigorous. However, the differences between Chinese and English sentence patterns inevitably require the interpreter to be flexible, like changing the parts of speech of words in the source language and reproducing the sentence, namely conversion and combination. The adjustment of words' parts of speech will greatly improve the quality of target text and the interpretation will be more conformed to idiomatic expressions[7].

Example 3:

ST: Kua guo gong si zai zhong guo de tou zi yu he zuo, tuo zhan le zhong guo can yu guo ji fen gong yu jing zheng de guang du he shen du, dai dong le quan qiu sheng chan lian tiao xiang zhong guo de kuai su yan shen.

TT: The investment and cooperation of multinational corporations encourage China to play a part in international labor distribution and competition, both intensively and extensively. It also extended global production chains to China rapidly[8].

Analysis:The noun "guang du" and "shen du" were converted into adverbs "intensively" and "extensively", which is in accordance with the principle of syntactic linearity by dividing the second part of the source text into two part. The memory capacity and production capacity are balanced in energy allocation. The last part of the sentence, literal translation the source language may be Chinglish, so the interpreter extracted the gist of source text and interpreted it in idiomatic English expression by put the verb "yan shen" ahead and omitted "dai dong le". Besides, though combination, the first two parts of the source text were connected fluently by "encourage" that was not constricted in the traditional translation of "tuo zhan", featuring "expand"[9].

4.1.3. Changing the Ear-voice Span

Waiting too long while listening to the source text may lead to overload of listening effort(L) and short-term memory(M) and then the production part does not have enough time and energy. To avoid the very long ear-voice span, the interpreter can make preparations before interpreting as much as possible. But if the source language is alien to the interpreter, waiting for another several seconds is a good choice, which means to lengthen the ear-voice span[10].

Waiting in simultaneous interpretation can also be divided into active and passive. Passive waiting means that the interpreter has difficulty in understanding the source language, or does not find the corresponding expression in the target language immediately. Active waiting means that when the context is not clear, the interpreter waits a little according to the situation, and then opens his mouth to translate after the context is clear. Active waiting is a necessary approach to solve the listening obstacles, reduce the acceptance load in the process of understanding, and seek more accurate translation. As mentioned in the previous chapter, there are great differences in syntax between English and Chinese, so simultaneous interpreters are faced with a greater listening and analysis load in the process of interpreting. In the practice of simultaneous interpretation, it is often the case that the antecedent part of prepositions appears first and then a gerund ensues, and its subject and predicate are not clear, so the interpreter can not distinguish the gist. If the interpreter devotes too much energy to distinguish the meaning of the gerund sentences, it will easily lead to unreasonable allocation of energy resources and poor performance of the interpreter. Therefore, in order to reduce the interpreter's listening and analyzing and short-term memory load and save energy to ensure the smooth progress of the interpretation task, the interpreter can wait appropriately, obtain a more complete sentence structure, understand the source language with the help of more information, and then carry out the generation and production. Prolonging the ear-voice span properly can have the interpreting more successful[11].

Example 4:

ST: Yi da pi "zou chu qu" de qi ye, tong guo jin xing zhuan ye hua, ji yue hua he gui mo hua de kua guo jing ying, zai geng da fan wei nei you hua zi yuan pei zhi, ji lei le jing yan, zeng qiang le can yu guo ji jing ji he zuo he jing zheng de neng li.

TT: Through specialized, integrated and holistic overseas operation on a large scale, a large number of "go-out" companies managed to optimize resource allocation, accumulate experiences, and participate in international economic and competition.

Analysis: Although the subject "qi ye" was given at the very beginning, the predicate of the sentence have not be given until a long adverbial was talked about. In this situation, changing the ear-voice span is the only way for the interpreter to form a clear and logic sentence. The interpreter also changed the segmentation of thought groups after prolonging the ear-voice span. What's more, the

adverbs "zhuan ye hua, ji yue hua he gui mo hua" were interpreted into two adverbs and one phrases to clarify the source meaning. However, the change may cause the overload on memory and the interpreter should practice more to improve it[12].

4.1.4. Vague language in numbers

Lots of numbers in the conference interpreting are big problems for interpreters who are not familiar with number conversion between Chinese and English. In interpreting, the rough numbers will replaced the exact numbers in the source text for the sake of time scarcity.

Example 5:

ST: Zai yin jin lai fang mian, jie zhi 2007 nian di, wo guo lei ji pi zhun she li wai shang tou zi qi ye 63.2 wan jia, lei ji shi ji shi yong wai zi jin e 7630 yi mei yuan.

TT: Regarding "to introduce foreign capital into China" policies, by the end of 2007, China had approved the establishment of over 600,000 foreign-invested corporations, and realized actual utilization of foreign capital of over 760 billion USD.

Example 6:

ST: Ju bu wan quan tong ji, jie zhi mu qian, zai fei zhou de 1407 jia zhong zi qi ye yi wei suo zai guo juan kuan juan wu gong ji 5551 wan mei yuan, yi wu xiu jian dao lu 218 gong li, wu chang wei dang di jian she le 15 suo xue xiao he 79 jia yi yuan, wei dang di pei xun yuan gong da dao 54030 ren.

TT: According to rough statistics, until now, in Africa, many Chinese business have donated huge amount of money and material resources locally and helped build long-distance railways and many schools and hospitals for free in addition to offering training to numerous local employees.

Analysis: In "example 5", "63.2 wan" was interpreted into "over 600,000" and "7630 yi" was interpreted into "over 760 billion". The exact numbers were rounding and the interpreter's memory capacity and production capacity will be balanced. The faithful principle was also obeyed. In "example 6", there are six numbers in one sentence. As a huge challenge in interpretation, there is no need to interpret the exact number, or the following steps can not be carried out smoothly. Those exact numbers are replaced by "many", "huge" and "numerous" etc.

The two ways help the interpreter accomplish the interpreting successfully.

5. Conclusion

Conference interpretation is a very difficult task, which needs hundreds of times to practice. In accordance with Effort Models, the daily practice of interpreters can be carried scientifically and efficiently. And of course, proper interpreting strategies and skills are of great importance for interpreters to finish the conference interpretation perfectly. With the policy of "go-out" and the development of globalization, the numbers of excellent interpreters can not meet the need of the whole country. Nevertheless, It is believed that in the near future, more excellent interpreters will emerge in China's interpretation talent team, which will contribute to the continuous improvement of China's internationalization level. Based on this theory and case study, the interpreter also has a better understanding of conference interpretation in a very limited time. The limited and difficult interlingual conversion activity requires the interpreter to understand, memorize and transform the source language information in a short time with the help of the existing background knowledge while identifying the source language. At the same time, in the process of production, the translator may also need to continue to monitor the source language, organize and express the target language. Successful conference interpretation requires the best coordination and allocation of translators in all aspects and the flexible application of corresponding interpretation strategies.

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