

Analysis of Multiple Roles of Interpreters in Business Escort Interpretation-Case Study of Escort Interpreting

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Abstract

This report mainly discusses the analysis of various roles played by the author in one of her business escort interpreting task. Escort interpreting is widely used in various foreign-related fields, such as technology, commerce, medical, tourism, agriculture, etc. Most are based on consecutive interpretation, but will also increase the demand for various types of interpretation tasks such as whispering interpretation and simultaneous interpretation according to the actual situation. In the process, three parties talk face to face, and the language conversion time is short. For interpreters, it is better to be flexible, and interpreters can adjust in real time to meet the needs of both parties, but at the same time interpreters are also facing tremendous pressure. In addition to the interpretation work itself, the interpreter also needs to play multiple roles in the long-term escort interpreting. In this report, the author analyzes, summarizes, and organizes a long-term escort interpretation task. In addition to serving as an Information Transmitter, the translator should also play various roles such as Event Organizer, Culture Transmitter, Personal Assistant, Communication Participant, etc. . Through practice and reflection, the author recognizes her shortcomings and hopes that her valuable experience can provide positive and negative examples for everyone, so that we can perform better in the future.

Keywords: escort interpreting; interpreter; business interpretation; information transmitter; event organizer; culture transmitter; communication participant; personal assistant

1. Task Description

The author is currently a second-year graduate student, majoring in English-Chinese Interpretation at Northwestern Polytechnical University. Although author's undergraduate major was not English-related, due to the enthusiasm and talent for oral English practice, the author has had systematic professional interpreting training and study. Besides the author has provided interpretation service for the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture, the Silk Road International Film Festival, Northwestern Polytechnical University, the United Nations, the Maker Space, the International Trade Center, Ford Company and etc. in terms of escort interpreting, consecutive interpretation and simultaneous interpretation, covering aspects of agriculture, finance, film and television, culture, aerospace, international political relations, education, innovation and entrepreneurship, project management, import and export trade, and the automotive industry.

From October 20th to 21st, 2019, the author was hired as an interpreter for the Niba Maker Space of Xi'an Maker Base, accompanying 13 international entrepreneurs of HAX Hardware Accelerator from the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, Germany, Singapore, and Canada with their two-days' trip to Xi'an.

Founded in April 2014, Niba Maker Space is a social learning community focusing on entrepreneurship. It provides services such as innovation and entrepreneurship courses, software and hardware courses, entrepreneurship and social networking, resource docking, early investment and venue equipment to members and organized various innovative entrepreneurial activities to help members achieve the implementation of entrepreneurial projects from none into reality. This community is based on the vision of "improving the innovation environment and realizing everyone's dreams". Today, a large number of outstanding entrepreneurial projects have been generated, and a total of nearly 100 million yuan of venture capital has been obtained.

HAX is affiliated with SOSV, a venture capital fund that mainly invests in start-ups around the world. SOSV was founded by Sean O'Sullivan and has more than \$550 million in assets under management. Its accelerators covers many fields such as hardware, software, biology, food, robotics, medical equipment, logistics, and green energy. As the most active and earliest investment institution under SOSV, HAX was established in September 2011. It is the world's first and largest hardware entrepreneurial accelerator, involving multiple fields such as consumption, health, enterprise and industrial applications. Since 2012, HAX has invested in more than 200 hardware start-ups.

This event was called International Makers' Trip. The Niba Maker Center has invited many well-known international makers to bring international communication and vision to the ancient city of Xi'an. In an in-depth exchange in the HAX Xi'an Hardware Accelerator Center in the high-tech entrepreneurship coffee block, the International Makers' Trip guided makers to focus on sustainable development areas such as community, education, environmental protection, health, energy and transportation, etc.,

combined with innovative ideas and cutting-edge technology, to build new products with social and industrial value.

The tasks of this escort interpreting event were complex and diverse, including professional exchanges in computer technology, materials technology and innovation and entrepreneurship, as well as informal introductions of Xi'an cuisine, culture and customs. In addition, the interpreter this time played multiple roles, and was in charge of all activities for those 13 foreign guests in the two days, in cooperation with another Chinese interpreter. So here is a summary to reasonably analyze the multiple roles accompanying interpreters play in complex situations.

During the two-days trip to Xi'an, the schedule of activities involving accompanying interpreters was as follows:

	Day 1: 20 th Oct.	Day 2: 21 st Oct.
Morning	Visiting Niba Maker Space	Visiting the Small Wild Goose Pagoda
	Lectures: 9:00-9:10: Opening and Introduction 9:10-9:40: Mitch Altman Topic: Makerspaces, Communities and Entrepreneurship 9:40-10:00: Benjamin Anderman Topic: How to learn to make hardware projects 10:00-10:20: Audrey Lim Topic: Self-cultivation from lawyers to female programmers 10:20-10:40: Lei Wang Topic: The entrepreneurial trend of intelligent hardware 10:40-11:30: Informal Discussion Lunch	
Afternoon	Visiting Maker Space Center of Xi'an Peihua University	Dumpling Feast
	Dinner at Chang'an Restaurant	The Walnut Bar
	Visiting Tang Dynasty City	

2. Pre-task Preparation

2.1 Background Knowledge Collection

After receiving the task, the author learned that this was an accompanying interpreting activity that involved a wide range of tasks and was burdensome. Therefore, at a working meeting with the employer prepared in the previous period, the author got all the existing information about the event - materials, including: lecture hosting drafts, Niba Space leaflets, food allergy list for foreign guests, Peihua College students' personal speeches. The author carefully checked the existing materials and specific itinerary, and concluded the lack of speeches or ppts from multiple speakers, ordering menus, introduction to the Peihua College Maker Center, commentaries of the Tang Dynasty Night City, commentaries of the Little Wild Goose Pagoda, dumpling feast cultural background materials. In this regard, on the one hand, the author tried to be as familiar as possible with the existing materials. Due to the urgent assignment of tasks and limited time, the author could only do her best to browse all the content first to understand the generality of the content. When preparing all the time, the author's focus was on the Niba Space leaflets and the Peihua College students' personal speeches, because these two parts would involve more technical terminologies such as computer technology, materials technology, 3D printing-related knowledge and chip-related knowledge etc.. It also contains a lot of English acronyms. On the other hand, for the lack of expected materials, the author planned to communicate with the speakers through the plan, search Shaanxi food related English introduction online, query the relevant content of the official website of Peihua College, the English translation of the promotional texts of the Tang Dynasty Night City and Little Wild Goose Pagoda and introduction to dumplings knowledge in English.

2.2 Glossaries Establishment

In terms of establishing terminologies, the author intended to establish two glossaries, one with science and technology as the core term, and the other with the tourism culture as the core terminology.

创业	entrepreneurship
计算机科学与技术	Computer science and technology
信号处理	Signal processing
人工智能	Artificial intelligence
.....	
饺子宴	Dumpling feast
花生	Peanuts
芝麻	Sesame
旅游旺季	Tourist peak hours
.....	

2.3 Challenges Prediction

Due to the lack of access to materials of consecutive interpretations, the interpreter can only prepare related terminologies and sentences, etc. based on the network data collection and bold guessing, and negotiate with partners in advance to handle alternate interpretation on formal occasions. The first day

of the event coincided with the Xi'an International Marathon. On the day there was rain, the interpreter worried that there would be delays in transportation time and other issues. In addition, the event lasted for many days, the interpreter needed to be accompanied from morning to night, worrying about her own physical problems.

3. During the Task

On the morning of October 20, the interpreter went to the workplace. Due to the rain on that day and the Xi'an International Marathon, there was a serious traffic jam on the road. The interpreter and many guests were way too late, resulting in the entire arrival time far exceeding the expected start of the visit. In order to unify the later activities, the organizer agreed to omit the visit to the Niba Maker Space and start the lecture directly. Fortunately, the lecture was held as scheduled. However, due to the large number of speakers and the slow pace of consecutive interpretation, the lecture was rushed to the end. After all guests immediately rushed to the dining place. After arriving at Peihua College that afternoon, the interpreter discovered that the task was more difficult than expected. The host who guided the visit to the maker center of Peihua College did not understand English at all, and the interpreter repeatedly encountered obstacles when they encountered very strange words. Fortunately, the partner was an expertise, and he made a timely rescue. During the night tour of Tang Dynasty Night City, due to the large number of foreign guests and the crowded attractions, it was difficult for the interpreter to be a tour guide. Fortunately, each one of the guest fellows strictly followed the lead. Although there were many people, the route of the attractions is not many, everyone could finally meet at the end.

On the morning of the next day on the 21st, we visited the Little Wild Goose Pagoda. There is the Xi'an Museum in the Little Wild Goose Pagoda park. The organizer asked the interpreter if she could be a tour guide. The interpreter said that she had no experience in introducing the Xi'an Museum in English and declined. The rest of the itinerary went smoothly.

4. Post-task Analysis

The author has many interpretation experiences, and is very outgoing and good at making friends. The author not only treats every opportunity of interpretation as a practical experience, but also a life experience. In this task, the interpreter has her own advantages, but also have many shortcomings. For science and technology interpretations, the interpreter needs to continue to strengthen her practice and strive for better. In addition, business interpretation is by no means limited to interpreting skills. It contains complex and diverse business communication philosophy, and it is worthy of the interpreter's efforts to gain the appreciation of both Chinese and foreign parties.

5. Case Study - Multiple Roles of Interpreters

5.1 Information Transmitter

The author believes that this "Information Transmitter" role is the primary role of the accompanying interpreter and the final purpose of the interpretation task. At the same time, the accurate communication

and transfer of information is also the demand of the employer in the task. The author could make full use of what she has learned in the classroom and previous practical experience throughout this interpreting period, and strove to complete this accompanying task. The so-called information transmission is not only the transmission of the content of the information, but also the sentimental components of the source speaker, the purpose of the speech, and even the expression of their actions and postures. This requires interpreter to adapt to the translation purpose of "faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance". For example, when dining, foreigners' usual expressions of food are almost always "Very good!" "Very nice!" "Thank you so much!" But if interpreter wanted to convey utterances like these to Chinese leaders, she needed to translate the source language adapted to a way that the Chinese could understand and accept. In this regard, the interpreter told the Chinese leader: "他们说这个简直太好吃了。外国人的饮食都比较的单一，这会儿来到了中国，还是中国西安，美食那么多，他们表示非常高兴非常感谢能给他们带来全新的味觉体验！" The interpreter appropriately added her own understanding when conveying the meaning, so that the Chinese leader who received the message was more able to adapt to this expression, and could truly appreciate the love and gratitude from the other party.

For example, on the last day, Chinese party invited foreign guests to The Walnut Bar. The Walnut Bar is a bar with rich nightlife that combines music, food, wine and performance into a more cultural atmosphere than a simple bar and provides cost-effective drinks and food. The three-dimensional and flexible space experience, high-quality wine and catering, accompanied music performances, and wonderful interpretations of international art genres have attracted a lot of music, art, food and wine lovers. The interpreter expressed the purpose of the Chinese leader to the foreign guests: "Tonight is your last night here in Xi'an. We all wish you could really enjoy yourselves. This is a great bar that we strongly recommend!" The interpreter conveyed the wishes that they could spend the last night, end the two-day intense and formal trip, come to the relaxing bar and enjoyed the night.

The author believes that in business accompanying interpretations, it is not only necessary to convey important information, but also to respect Chinese business culture and respect Chinese business communication habits. When doing business, Chinese people would also focus on how to do this business. Chinese people like to express their hospitality everywhere, especially if they are at the leadership level, they must also show their hospitality to entertain their guests, which requires interpreters to be able to express it to foreign guests.

In addition, in this accompanying task, because of a large number of scientific and technical vocabulary, interpreters inevitably encountered words that she does not understand. In this regard, after receiving the source language, the interpreter cooperated with her partner to find each other for help, or expanded the interpretation of the words that she did not understand. For technical terms, there are a lot of abbreviated words. When interpreter encountered this situation, she chose to express directly without translating, such as CPU, MCU and others. However, in order to achieve satisfactory interpretation results,

interpreters should obtain relevant materials in advance before each alternate interpretation begins, such as speeches, power-points, etc. to prepare in advance, so that it can ensure that unknown words can be queried and resolved in advance.

5.2 Event Organizer

Because all activities are full of uncertainties due to objective factors such as time. It is necessary to make appropriate adjustments to subsequent activities when one activity is performed. Interpreters play a very important role in this process. In this mission, the itinerary mentioned above is the actual implementation of the itinerary, and the original itinerary was a few more. The cause of this reduction is due to the long delay of some previous lectures and other activities. After all, consecutive interpretation takes time. In this case, the interpreter needed to communicate with the organizer in time to adjust the schedule of the following events in real time, so that it will not lead to conflicts and contradictions in time.

In addition to the issue of time limits, interpreters are required to participate in the whole process, for example, how to make the itinerary most simplified, how to arrange the meals according to the food allergies of the foreign guests, and how to decide the daily departure time of the foreign guests etc..

5.3 Communication Participant

Interpretation is a purposeful activity involving at least three parties. During the interpretation, with the help of interpreters, people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds can communicate and understand each other. Naturally, the interpreters not only complete translation tasks, they are also part of the main body of dialogue. (Ren Wen, 2006: 87-88) In the accompanying interpreter activities, the interpreter as a participant in the dialogue must also be able to ensure that the topic runs smoothly and avoid embarrassing communication. (Peng Feng, 2009) For example, at one of the formal dinners, there was only one Chinese leader and one American leader. During the meal, the US leader talked with the interpreter.

Client: Where have you been studying your English?

Interpreter: Only in China.

Client: Have you ever been to any other countries? America?

Interpreter: Yes. I just went to America this April.

Client: Great! What were you up to there?

(Interpreter started talking about herself personal trip experience in America. Since the client is American, he naturally had something to talk about about America with the interpreter.)

During this process, the interpreter gradually started chatting with this American client, realizing that Chinese leaders were being neglected, which is a very taboo phenomenon in the process of business situation. However, if the interpreter takes the initiative to interrupt the chat with the American client, it

is also not appropriate to turn around to talk with the Chinese leader. So the interpreter chose the intervals during the communication, naturally turned her head to the Chinese leader first, signaling the US client, and then talked to the Chinese leader, "他在问我我在美国的经历。您有没有去过美国呢?" This way started a conversation with Chinese leaders. The interpreter believes that this kind of caring talk can ease the embarrassment of both sides and bring a sense of participation to the Chinese leader.

For another example, at an informal dining table, China's expectation is to allow foreign guests to fully enjoy Chinese food and understand Chinese food culture. At this time, the interpreter is required to play the role of a conversation participant, accompany the foreign guests during the informal dining process, and conduct informal communication. The content of the communication can involve the personalities, cultural understanding, or sharing of insights. In this case, the interpreter, as a participant in the dialogue, represented the Chinese party, and welcomed the arrival and presence of foreign guests. In short, in the process of accompanying interpretation, interpreter can appropriately and needs to participate in private exchanges with Chinese and foreign parties, and balance the formal and informal dialogue.

5.4 Culture Transmitter

Zhan Cheng (2010: 78) stated that interpreting is a kind of linguistic communication activity and also a communication activity of different cultural backgrounds. Kim (1991: 262-263) believes that intercultural communicative competence is a person's intrinsic ability, that is, no matter what the specific cultural background, people have the ability to cope with various cross-cultural communication situations. The core of this ability is to make specific adjustments to unknown specific upcoming situations. This ability is reflected in many aspects-cognition, emotion and behavior. But no matter what aspect of adaptive ability, it must be reflected through communicative language. As a translator, we must be aware of the differences between Chinese and Western cultures, so that we can be more flexible in the process of performing tasks. For example, Western culture is open-minded and straightforward; while traditional Chinese culture requires that on-face conflicts need to be avoided as much as possible. Especially in the process of accompanying interpreting, with this commercial nature, the interpreter found that, especially in the occasion of dining, various forms of cultural conflicts often appeared. No matter what class the foreigners are, they are relatively easy-going, and Chinese leaders emphasize class distinctions in the catering culture. On the one hand, the interpreter did have a task herself, and she needed to continuously translate the name and ingredients of the food. On the other hand, the interpreter was slightly nervous about dining exchanges, and considered various aspects such as her manners and postures. During the many meals, the interpreter had almost no time and no thoughts about eating. In this regard, Chinese leaders have expressed that they are more accustomed to this, which is common, but foreigners are more easy-going and invited interpreter to participate in each meal. In this case, the interpreter should perform well. They should not make a bad impression on the Chinese side by eating food at sea or embarrassing the foreign side without eating at all.

In the accompanying interpreting, which includes many visits and excursions, it is indispensable for interpreters to provide cultural introductions as cultural communicators. The author was early noticed that the itinerary includes the "Chang'an Dumpling Feast" in advance, so she made preparations of Chinese dumpling culture. Obviously, according to Chinese customs and traditions, the dumpling feast must include different meanings of dumplings of different shapes. The dining is located in the Defachang Dumpling House near the Bell Tower in Xi'an. Defachang was established in 1935. It was originally an old-fashioned restaurant specializing in Beijing-style dumplings. It is the well-known Chinese catering industry at home and abroad and a national premium restaurant. It is also the largest variety of dumpling banquets currently available. On the basis of dumpling cultures in the early 1980s, Defachang collected the best of the best of the ingredients, flavors, cooking, nutrition, form and art and developed the vision of "each dumpling has each shape and taste", giving guests a feeling of "a meal of dumpling banquets and tastes all over the world", which has been praised as "eternal flavor" by domestic and foreign guests. Dumplings are a traditional Chinese food that has been in the Tang Dynasty for more than a thousand years. Food and culture are cleverly combined together. The dumplings are rich in raw materials and diverse in shape. The techniques of molding, sculpture, combination, and embellishment are integrated, so that each dumpling is skillfully combined with modern art. Since the advent of the dumpling feast, it has been favored by gourmets at home and abroad, and has become a local flavor feature, known as "a wonderful work of the China". The Xi'an dumplings has also added flowers, birds, fish, insects, seasons, and customs of the country. Each dumpling is as beautiful as a work of art. The dumpling master said, "The dumpling is a skill passed down by the ancestor. Although the dumpling is not a rare food, it carries the feelings of the Chinese children from generation to generation, and carries the nostalgia of the Chinese people. Dumplings are unique to Chinese cuisine. It symbolizes reunion and inclusiveness. You have to make them with heart. " Defachang Dumplings break the tradition in shape and strive for excellence, comprehensively making techniques such as molding, sculpture, combination, embellishment, etc., making dumplings show a variety of flowers, birds, fish, and skillfully combine the modeling technology and art of each dumpling. The shape of the dumplings is like goldfish playing in water, colorful butterflies flying, bunny jumping, and cute penguins. Every time the dumpling master performs a shape of dumpling production, he will give a different meaning to this shape of dumpling. For the Chinese, blessings such as good luck, ascendance, and fortune are different, however, if translated directly into English, it seems redundant. For example, frog-shaped dumplings. Because frogs produce a lot of eggs, frog dumplings mean the blessing for your whole family. The expression in English is "best wishes for your whole family." This is also the meaning of lotus dumpling. The interpreter found that many different shapes of dumplings have different meanings, and the dumpling master has no regular order for making each dumpling, which brought much difficulties to the interpreter's translation. But if the interpreter chose not to translate or delete some parts, the silent gap will not be liked by Chinese leaders.

So the interpreter decided that when the dumpling master introduced each dumpling, she tried to simplify the translation as much as possible, highlighting the certain shape of the dumpling and its

allegorical meaning. After all the dumplings of all shapes were made, the interpreter emphasized to the guests again: "All different shapes of dumplings show our best wishes on your family, career and your healthy lives." In addition, the process of the dumpling feast is a dumpling performance followed by the next dumpling. However, the Western dining habits are that after tasting a dish, they will communicate with each other and evaluate it, which requires a certain amount of time. However, due to the special material of dumplings, if the next one is not carried out as soon as possible, the final production effect may not be perfect. In this regard, interpreter ad played her role as cultural communicators. The interpreter needed to weigh the speed of Chinese dumpling masters for making dumplings and the speed of delivery of the meals for foreign guests, and to coordinate the time between the two sides. Through interpretation, they can understand each other. This is also a cultural experience for foreign guests.

5.5 Personal Assistance

In addition to the multiple roles mentioned above, in the long-term accompanying interpreting for more than a day, the employer expects the interpreter to hold multiple positions and unite to promote the smooth completion of the event. During the meeting, it was discussed that there was a visit to the Little Wild Goose Pagoda in the schedule. In addition to the Little Wild Goose Pagoda Park, there is also a Xi'an Museum. Given that the interpreter has experience in museum-accompanied interpreting, the employer wants the process to be handled by the interpreter. The content includes: determining the total number of people to visit in the previous period, explaining the number of tourists and purchasing tickets related matters according to the number of people. After a variety of consultations and inquiries, the interpreter determined the necessary conditions such as fares and time to successfully complete the task.

Accompanying interpreting needs to be prepared for emergencies, due to the variety of locations. For example, after the meal at the dumpling place, two foreign guests expressed the hope that they could purchase brushes and paper of calligraphy to bring home. The throwing of this requirement also poses a problem for the interpreter: on the one hand, the interpreter must meet the needs of foreign guests, on the other hand, should not leave the remaining foreign guests alone. Fortunately, the two foreign guests were more reasonable and casual, and said that they could go and buy by themselves according to the provided address map.

In short, accompanying interpreting is not an easy task. It is difficult and challenging to examine the many abilities and skills of accompanying interpreters.

6. Conclusion

As an English interpreting-majored student, this task is not only an exercise for the author in professional skills, but also her own passion. When her undergraduate major was not English, the author had actively trained her interpreting skills and participated in many types of interpretation activities. The author believes that interest is the driving force for everything, but interest alone cannot drive further.

For each precious interpretation opportunity, the author strives for perfection, meeting the requirements and satisfaction of both Chinese and foreign parties, and her own satisfaction. As mentioned earlier, the author not only treats every interpretation opportunity as a task, but also as a pleasant life experience. In this process, the most important thing is self-learning and self-improvement. It is also important to know more interesting and knowledgeable people, whether Chinese or foreigners. From them, the author learns a new life and different life and work attitude. As the saying goes, reading thousands of books and walking thousands of miles, for the author, seeing 10,000 people knows a lot.

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