On Comprehension Obstacles in Conference Consecutive Interpreting Based on Gile's Efforts Models and Comprehension Equation

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Abstract:

Gile's Effort Models pay attention to different stages of the process of interpretation. The Comprehension Equation aims to explaining why interpreter makes errors during the interpretation. And barriers are the unavoidable elements in the interpretation. This paper is going to dig out why the barriers exist based on Gile's Effort Models and Comprehension Equation and thereafter conclude possible solutions.

Keywords: Effort Models, Comprehension Equation, interpretation, barriers

1. Introduction

Interpretation is one of the vital important translation activities nowadays. It is divided into consecutive interpretation and simultaneous interpretation. Consecutive interpretation is widely used in conferences, especially in the International-level and State-level conference. Thus, the accuracy of the interpretation is crucial. According to Gile's Effort Models, there are four procedures in the process of interpretation. General barriers that appear in conference interpreting, like barriers in listening, note-taking, memorizing and expressing. These are the common barriers which will influence both the result and the quality of the interpretation. This paper is going to analysis the obstacles in these four aspects.

2. Gile's Effort Models and Comprehension Equation

A. Promotion of Effort Models and Comprehension Equation

Efforts Models was first put forward by Daniel Gile in 1970s. He supposed that there were some unavoidable mistakes during the procedure of interpretation like missing some important information or mis-translated even when interpreting some easy-understanding information. These problems are caused by the attention put by interpreter on different parts. Based on this, he put forward Effort's Models and Comprehension Equation which explain effort distribution and lead interpreters choosing different strategies and skills so that the quality of interpretation can be increased.

In *Basic Concepts and Models for Interpreter and Translator Training* published in 1995, Gile proposed "model for simultaneous interpreting" and "model for consecutive interpreting" according to different working patterns. Here, we mainly talk about consecutive interpretation.

B. Working Pattern of Effort Models and Comprehension Equation

Gile's Efforts Models for consecutive interpreting includes two stages:

Stage one:

CI=L+M+N+C

CI=Consecutive Interpreting;

L=Listening and Analysis

M=Short-term Memory operation

N=Note-taking

C=Comprehension

In this session, the main task for the interpreter is to memorize and analysis the information they heard. They use note-taking and short-term memory as the main vehicle to store the information in mind.

Stage two: CI=Rem+NR+P

Rem= Remembering

NR=Note-reading

P=Production

In this session, the most important part is the output of the information. Interpreters produce the information at the same time of remembering the note to make the information more comprehensive and ensure the quality of interpretation.

According to Daniel Gile, the comprehension (C) consists of three elements: knowledge of language (KL) extra-linguistic knowledge (ELK) and analysis(A). The equation is C=KL+ELK+A

Just as Gile put it, "the basic relation shown in the equation is complementary between KL and ELK: the higher the level of each component belongs, the better the resulting comprehension will be." In other words, the better the interpreter is equipped with knowledge

of language and extra linguistic knowledge, the better interpreting performance the interpreter could achieve.

3. Interpretation and Conference Interpretation

A. Interpretation and Classification

Interpretation is the oral way of translation. The interpreter is thus required to translate the information he/she heard to the target language swiftly and accurately. Changing one language to another so that finish the process of communication. Therefore, interpretation is regarded as the basic tool in the process of cross-cultural communication. Interpretation can be divided into different types according to different standards. Generally speaking, two main types are widely discussed—consecutive interpretation and simultaneous interpretation. These two are totally different no matter from the features, requirements or methods. Apart from this, interpretation can also be divided into different types according to its function or the situation it appears. For instance, it can be divided as business interpretation, tourist interpretation or industry interpretation etc. Or, it can be divided into conference interpretation, negotiation interpretation etc. In this paper, conference interpretation is mainly discussed.

B. Conference Interpretation

Conference Interpretation can be realized as the interpreter transfer one language to another in the conference context. Irrevocability is the feature of conference interpretation which means once the output is finished, the interpreter has no chance to repeat or redo the interpretation. Conference interpretation plays a crucial role in international-level conferences or international business negotiation. Apart from the conference, it is also widely used in foreign affairs, business activities, news media, training and teaching, television broadcasting, international arbitration and many other fields. Also, it has become a professional career. When doing the consecutive interpretation, the interpreter is making notes when listening to the speech. When the speaker stop talking, the interpreter started to interpreting. However, in the simultaneously interpretation, the interpreter should started interpreting once the speaker starts talking. With the help of equipment, the interpreter do not need to interrupt the speaker.

4. On Comprehension Obstacles in Conference Consecutive Interpreting Based on Gile's Efforts Models and Comprehension Equation

Since Gile's Efforts Models and Comprehension Equation demonstrate the how process of interpretation, the barriers exist in each part of the interpretation. Thus, the barriers will be analyzed according to the process of Consecutive Interpretation.

A. Listening Barriers

Of all the elements in the interpretation, listening is always be put in the first place, and it is also regarded as the most important one. So far as interpreting is concerned, listening

comprehension is the utmost factor. Without a full understanding of what the original speaker wants to express, it is almost impossible for the interpreter to express in another language if listening understanding become an obstacle.

Listening in interpretation is different from other types of listening comprehension. Instead of taking words or phrase as understanding units, meaning here is the basic understanding unit. This is also the key elements in the first phase of interpretation. After listening to the passage, interpreters should focus on the meaning of the information instead of the words or sentences.

Besides, accent and noise are the two main influential factors. In the conference, speakers will have different accents, and the environment is not 100% quiet, therefore. noises exist everywhere. That requires the interpreter has the perfect ability of listening comprehension and good concentration.

Take the author's interpreting sample as an example.

Example 1：

SL（Source Language）:联盟成立一年多来，陆续开展了学生夏令营、青年学者论坛、世界杯复合材料大赛、微小卫星设计大赛等活动，均取得非常好的效果，达到了预期的目标。同时联盟秘书处还积极开拓，进一步加强了与联合国外空司、国际宇航联、亚太空间合作组织(APSCO)等国际组织之间的联系与合作，有效地扩大了联盟的国际影响，为联盟成员单位之间的交流合作搭建了平台，加强了盟内各成员单位之间的了解及联系。这些成绩的取得离不开联盟秘书处各位同事的辛勤付出，也得益于各成员单位的积极参与。

TT(Target Language):Since its establishment, <u>Students' Summer Camp, Young Scholars Workshop, Composite Battle World Cup and CubeSate Competition</u> are launched and all highly appreciated and received. Also, the Alliance secretariat has also actively developed and further strengthened its contacts and cooperation with international organizations such as the United Nations Space Division, the International Astronautical Federation and the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization, thus effectively expanding the international impact of the Alliance. It provides a platform.

In this paragraph, the interpreter focus more on the name of different competitions and organizations, so the main information was ignored. Some key information like "加强了盟内各成员单位之间的了解及联系" was missed. These are the comparable more important than names of the organizations.

Based on these elements exists in the listening, there comes some solutions.

Listening in the conference is different from listening practice in the classroom. This will bring the pressure to the interpreter. The meaning here is more important. In the process of conference interpretation, the interpreter should change their minds from "listening words"

to "listening meaning". Listening for words means the listener should focus on the key words and finish the task, but the later one is totally different. The interpreter should focus on the comprehensive meaning as well as the key words, which is more difficult.

Therefore, to deal with the listening barriers in conference interpreting, the interpreter should listen to different versions of English instead of the standard one. Besides, interpreters should take "understanding" as the priority, spending more time on the meaning instead of struggling on what the exact word is. After all, in the conference, meaning is the most important thing. Moreover, interpreter should better finish listening and understanding at the same time so as to provide more time for interpreting

B. Memory and Note-taking

In the process of interpreting, memory and note-taking are two important vehicles for helping interpreters to finish interpretation. The original context and the key information should be stored, and these two are the main methods to store information.

a) Memory

Memory can be divided as two types: short-term memory and long-term memory. Short-term memory is a kind of memory which exist in our mind for a short period of time. It stores the information that has been selected deliberately. If necessary, the information will be changed into long-term memory. As stated in the theory of psychology, short-term memory can only exist for one minute. (Bao Gang 150). In interpreting, short-term memory is always linked with note-taking, they worked together to help the interpreter to store information.

Long-term memory is the main way used to store information and message in brain for a relatively long time, which will exist from one minute to the whole life. The interpreter should pick up any useful information during the interpretation process.

All these two kinds of memories are strongly connected with interpretation. Short-term memory and long-term memory are connected with storage of information. During the interpreting, both these two are quite often used together.

Example 2：

SL:研究院面向海空天，发展新三航，通过"搬一批、引一批、育一批"，形成了以"精、微、云"新兴交叉技术和"星、器、船"特色优势平台为支撑的"三高"产业组团和待孵化集群。

TT1：Through the "moving a series, introduce a series, and breed a series ", the "three high" industrial groups and the cluster hatched are supported by "precision technology, micro technology, and cloud technology "and" satellites, instruments, marine technology".

TT2：Through the "industries moving, talents introducing, and enterprise breeding ", industrial groups of high technology, high added value and high-growth are introduced.

Cluster supported by "precision technology, micro technology, and cloud technology" and "satellites, instruments, marine technology" are formed.

In this sample, memory is a key element as well as note-taking which will be discussed later. For short-term memory, the interpreter should quickly memorize what the speaker said, the structure of the sentence and the logical order between each part. Long term memory here also plays an important role. The interpreter should have vast knowledge about what the abbreviation represents and what the single Chinese should be interpreted in English? For example, translating "三高" into "three high" is not correct, and may cause misunderstanding, as we all know hypertension, hyperlipemia and hyperglycemia are called "three high" in Chinese. Here, the wrong interpretation will cause misunderstanding. Thus, it should be explained, the specific content should be demonstrated to the audience. Here, the author revised a different version, "high technology, high added value and high-growth" is the meaning of this abbreviation. Besides, "精、微、云""星、器、船"stand for different things, if the interpreter does not have this kind of knowledge before, the interpretation may failed.

From this, it is not hard to find that, long- term memory plays an important role, it can help the interpreter dig out the useful information from their memory so that making interpretation qualified.

For interpreters, preparation towards target knowledges should be made before conference in case of the mistranslation.

b) Note-taking

When the source context is longer than one minute with massive information, note will be used as an important assistance. The note can remind the interpreter as short-term memory. According to physiological linguistics, complicated grammatical structure with excessive information sometimes will outweigh the capacity of brain's short-term memory as people always forget what the speakers have already said when they concentrate on what is heard (GuiShichun 96). Therefore, they have no chance to make the whole procedure comprehensively. In this sense, interpreter should write down the key information in proper form which named as note-taking.

Note-taking in the process of interpretation can be regarded as a reminder, note that used by interpreter to write down original content, key words and anything else which are essential spontaneously and accurately with the help of sorting out the thinking pattern of the original memory. That is to say, note taking in interpretation is only a reminding supplement to short term memory or long term memory within certain time, which can not totally take the place of memory but only a trigger to remind the interpreter what kind of information should be highlighted.

On the other hand, note taking is usually used for a short period of time with unique signals taken by the interpreter. Which is to say, the note by one interpreter is not easily understand by another one.

Example 3：

ST：研究院面向海空天，发展新三航，通过"搬一批、引一批、育一批"，形成了以"精、微、云"新兴交叉技术和"星、器、船"特色优势平台为支撑的"三高"产业组团和待孵化集群。
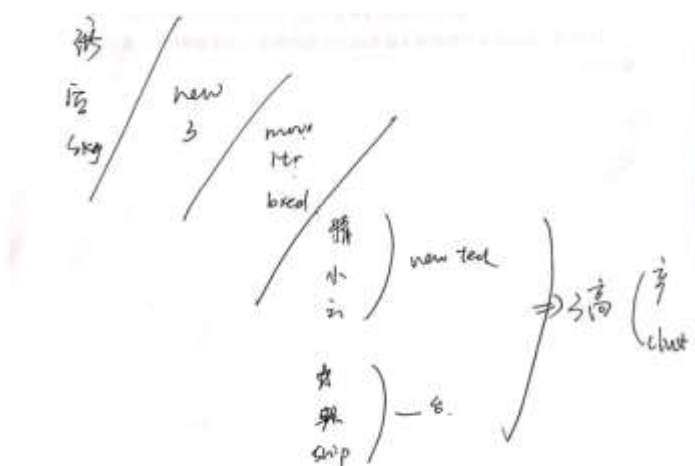
This example demonstrates the structure of this paragraph, the key elements have already been noted. The structure is clear. However, problems still exist in this note. First, too much words are included in this, which will waste time for the interpreter. Second, the structure is clear while the logic order is not so easy to find, such words "through", "by" can be added in the note so that the interpreter can easily read the note and interpret.

C. Expression Barriers

Listening and memory can be regarded as input while the expression, or the interpretation can be regarded as output. The thesis has already talked about problems exist in the process of input. There also have problems and barriers in the procedure of output which will be discussed in this part.

Presentation is the crucial part of the whole processfor it requires the consequence of the information. The accuracy of the result is thereafter important. Here are several principals towards the expression. If the interpreter does not follow them, the expression can not be regarded as a good one, thus, the barriers arise.

First, for those figures, proper nouns, terminologies, articles quoted and so on, most of the general content is not suitable to be interpreted in a word-for-word way. Furthermore, the interpreter should use their own words to deliver the original meaning. To achieve this, the interpreter should be familiar with common expressions, and be able to summarize the meaning of the speaker and break the limits of sentence patterns and categories of words.

Example 4:

SL:希望大家能够通过参观走访企业、专题知识讲座、科学实操竞赛、中国文化体验等，开阔眼界、增长知识；交流研讨、增进友谊。相信大家在一定能够有所收获，有所成长，为推动"一带一路"倡议的实施贡献更广泛的智慧和力量！

TT:Hope you can broaden your horizons and increase your knowledge by visiting enterprises, having different lectures and workshops. Making more friends by communicating with each other. I believe you will be able to gain something during the summer camp and contribute to the implementation of the "Belt and Road" initiative.

This is a good explanation, the interpreter does not focus on the words and phrase, instead, she pays more attention to the whole structure and the meaning of the paragraph. Some useless information can be ignored, some phrase with the same meaning can be combined. And it is very clear for the audience to grasp the main idea of this paragraph.

Second, the principal is clear and precise. In the process of interpreting, the listening—memory—note-taking—interpreting should be finished in a short period of time, there is no chance for the interpreter to do it again. Thus, the interpreter must to the expression clear and precise, words and phrases that are easy to cause misunderstanding should be avoided.

Example 5:

ST:中国有句俗话，叫做：众人拾柴火焰高。联盟各项工作的发展离不开各成员单位的关注和支持。希望通过这次研讨，一方面加强各位联络人之间的了解和联系，另一方面对联盟工作的机制提出积极有效地建议，保障联盟健康有序发展。

TT:A Chinese proverb goes as "When everybody adds fuel, the flames rise high", the development of all works in the alliance relies on the support of all parties. It is hoped that through this discussion, on one hand, we can strengthen the understanding and contact among us, on the other hand, we can put forward positive and effective suggestions on the mechanism of the alliance's work, so as to ensure the healthy and orderly development of the alliance.

In this example, there has a Chinese proverb. When dealing with these kinds of words, the interpreter should pay much attention for the wrong translation may cause misunderstanding. Here, the interpreter does not use "word-to-word" translation to explain the meaning of the proverb, instead, she uses free translation. This is a good way to avoid the probable mistake.

Third is the time distribution. The time spending in the interpretation should be the same as that in original speech. The time gap should not be long, if so, the listener should doubt whether the interpreter understand the speech or not. In order have a perfect time-balance, special techniques and skills should be used. What's more, the interpreter should avoid unnecessary steps, redundant expressions, and restless repeats so that the barriers can be solved.

5. Conclusion

Based on the analysis above, it is not hard to find out that in the process of interpretation, there are many aspects needs to be considered and balanced by the interpreter. The interpreter needs to realize that the meaning is the essential of the whole procedure. To maximize the effect of meaning in the procedure, the interpreter should make good use of notes and long-term memory which means finding a balanced point between them. Besides, the interpreter should have a good skill in listening, not for the detail of the listening material but the meaning of it. By considering all these effects, the interpreter can make the output best in both language level and communicative level.

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