

PROBLEMS OF LISTENING AND MEMORY TRAINING IN TRANSLATION

Given article is devoted to some problems of listening and memory training in translation. Why we named these problems difficult and decided to study it? As we know, there are two kinds of human memory: long- and short-termed. We often forget almost immediately, what has just been said. As a result, we waste a lot of time on looking through the equitable information in the dictionaries.

Keywords: listening, memory training, translation, interpreting, text, experience.

ПРОБЛЕМЫ ПРОСЛУШИВАНИЯ И ТРЕНИРОВКА ПАМЯТИ В ПЕРЕВОДЕ

Данная статья посвящена некоторым проблемам прослушивания и тренировки памяти в переводе. Почему мы назвали эти проблемы трудно, и решил изучить его? Как известно, существует два вида человеческой памяти: долгосрочный и непродолжительным. Мы часто забываем, почти сразу же, что только что было сказано. В результате, мы тратим много времени на поиск через равноправной информации в словарях.

Ключевые слова: прослушивание, обучение памяти, перевод, устный перевод, текст, опыт.

Interpreting is defined as "oral translation of a written text". Interpreting consists of presenting in the target language; the exact meaning of what is uttered in the source language either simultaneously or consecutively, preserving the tone of the speaker. Whether novice or experienced, all interpreters find this profession demanding and challenging. "When an interpreter is working, he or she cannot afford to have a bad day. One bad interpreter can ruin a conference".

"The interpreter needs a good short-term memory to retain what he or she has just heard and a good long-term memory to put the information into context. Ability to concentrate is a factor as is the ability to analyze and process what is heard". Daniel Gile emphasizes the difficulties and efforts involved in interpreting tasks and strategies needed to overcome them, observing that many failures occur in the absence of any visible difficulty. He then proposes his Effort Models for interpreting. He says that "The Effort Models are designed to help them [interpreters] understand these difficulties [of interpreting] and select appropriate strategies and tactics. They are based on the concept of Processing Capacity and on the fact that some mental operations in interpreting require much Processing Capacity." According to Gile, Consecutive Interpreting consists of two phases: a listening and reformulation phase and a reconstruction phase.

Phase One: $I=L+M+N$

I=Interpreting, L=listening and analyzing the source language speech, M=short-term memory required between the time information is heard and the time it is written down in the notes, and N=note-taking.

Phase Two: $I= Rem+Read+P$

In this Phase Two of Consecutive Interpreting, interpreters retrieve messages from their short-term memory and reconstruct the speech (Rem), read the notes (N), and produce the Target Language Speech (P). Giles Effort Model for Simultaneous Interpreting is:

$SI=L+M+P$

SI=Simultaneous Interpreting.

L=Listening and Analysis, which includes "all the mental operations between perception of a discourse by auditory mechanisms and the moment at which the interpreter either assigns, or decides not to assign, a meaning (or several potential meanings) to the segment which he has heard."

M=Short-term Memory, which includes "all the mental operations related to storage in memory of heard segments of discourse until either their restitution in the target language, their loss if they vanish from memory, or a decision by the interpreter not to interpret them."

P=Production, which includes "all the mental operations between the moment at which the interpreter decides to convey a datum or an idea and the moment at which he articulates (overtly produces) the form he has prepared to articulate" (1995a:93).

Gile emphasizes that the memory effort is assumed to stem from the need to store the words of a proposition until the hearer receives the end of that proposition. The storage of information is claimed to be particularly demanding in SI, since both the volume of information and the pace of storage and retrieval are imposed by the speaker (1995a:97-98).

In both models, Gile emphasizes the significance of Short-term Memory. It is actually one of the specific skills which should be imparted to trainees in the first stage of training. Among all the skills and techniques which are required for a good interpreter, memory skill is the first one which should be introduced to trainee interpreters.

Psychological studies of human memory make a distinction between Short-Term Memory (STM) and Long-Term Memory (LTM). The idea of short-term memory simply means that you are retaining information for a short period of time without creating the neural mechanisms for later recall. Long-Term Memory occurs when you have created neural pathways for storing ideas and information which can then be recalled weeks, months, or even years later. To create these pathways, you must make a deliberate attempt to encode the information in the way you intend to recall it later. Long-term memory is a learning process. And it is essentially an important part of the interpreter's acquisition of knowledge, because information stored in LTM may last for minutes to weeks, months, or even an entire life. The duration of STM is very short. It is up to 30 seconds. Peterson (1959) found it to be 6 - 12 seconds, while Atkinson and Shiffrin (1968) and Hebb (1949) state it is 30 seconds. Memory in interpreting only lasts for a short time. Once the interpreting assignment is over, the interpreter moves on to another one, often with different context, subject and speakers. Therefore, the memory skills which need to be imparted to trainee interpreters are STM skills.

It is especially harmful when we have to use the simultaneous translation. Short-Term Memory is also an essential part of interpreting, but memory training has long been ignored by professional trainers. From the above analysis, we can conclude that memory skills in interpreting could be acquired by effectively designed exercises. With a well-trained short-term memory, interpreters are actually equipped with an effective tool for the encoding and decoding information. It is, therefore, advised that institutions of interpreter training include "memory training" in the design of their courses.

The second part of the problem is that we cannot listen effectively. The problem caused as a result of it is that we are not able to transmit the received information to the other speakers. As a result, the students of foreign languages possess a bad capacity to retell the textual information without mistakes or more or less adequately. That is why so important for the teachers of foreign languages to know the appropriate methodic of listening. Our qualification work might give such an opportunity for the teachers. We gave a number of methods which are suitable and approved by the collective of educators in the USA and Europe.

I have found the following method of practicing sight translation most effective, if used in a combination of self-study and supervised performance:

- Sight translates aloud for about twenty minutes a day, preferably seven days a week. The time should be subdivided into ten-minute practice sessions to and from the target language.
- Use any current newspapers or magazines, preferably different materials each day or week. At first, sight translate only one or two paragraphs of various articles, making sure that they range over

a considerable spectrum of topics--politics, economics, brief news items, society gossip, sports, theater or film, book reviews.

- Sight translate as evenly as possible, to create the illusion of a read text. Skip, improvise, or simplify as needed, but try to convey the message accurately and in complete sentences.
- Do not pause to look up words or phrases, but underline special troublemakers or unknown terms (while guessing at them) in order to check them out and learn them later.
- Sit down and learn such terms once you have collected twenty or thirty, and review them on days when there are no new lists to memorize.
- Listen to your oral presentation while sight translating, and force yourself to use the foreign language as correctly and as literately as you can, and your native language as elegantly and appropriately as possible.
- Avoid, if at all possible, terms or constructions in the foreign language that an educated native speaker would not be likely to use. (You can try such terms in your written translations or compositions where they can be corrected or discussed, and where they can contribute to the development of a style of your own. Here your aim is meaningful and correct communication presented smoothly and clearly.)

Long before the emergence of most academic translation and interpretation programs, sight translation was practiced systematically in the language school in Vienna where I studied English and French. My regular practice of it, coupled with consistent vocabulary memorization, resulted in my arrival in the United States with so extensive an active English vocabulary that it proved embarrassing, and I quickly reduced it to a less conspicuous level. But what better goal could there be for language teachers than that of preparing our students to face similar embarrassments in a country whose language they have learned here at home? H.L. MENCKEN used to tell the story of a state legislator who clinched his argument against a proposed allocation of funds for foreign language instruction by declaring proudly, "If English was good enough for Jesus Christ, its good enough for me." Funny perhaps, but it is hard to keep smiling when similar expressions of smug obscurantism continue to crop up with embarrassing frequency and in the most surprising places. We have a habit in this country of throwing money at problems. This leads to a sort of "greening of America" with a difference. What I mean is that federal assistance and private funding increased FL enrollments for a time, but all the while SAT scores were declining. This is a point we would do well to remember as we enter what may be a new era of federal funding for foreign language and area studies. One unexpected result of the Helsinki Accords has been to bring the importance of international studies to the attention of President Carter. Each signatory commits itself to "encourage the study of foreign languages and civilizations as an important means of expanding communication among peoples--for the strengthening of international cooperation." Having signed the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the United States finds itself in a rather embarrassing position since it needs to do a great deal more than it is currently doing to "encourage the study of foreign languages and civilizations." In response chiefly to the actions of Representative Paul Simon of Illinois, the President has ordered the creation of a Presidential Commission on Foreign Languages and International Studies, which should submit its report during 1978.

One encouraging difference between this renewed federal interest in foreign languages and that prompted by sputnik twenty years ago is tone. For example, it was significant that the former National Defense Foreign Language (NDFL) fellowships have been retitled Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships. In other words, "defense" is being removed from the title, and from the motivation behind offering the awards. It would seem that we feel less threatened militarily and have a more healthy understanding of the importance of foreign languages for our national well-being, even in a world at peace.

Conclusion

As we tried to the problems of good listening and constant training of short-term memory are one of the most difficult and problematic for those who want to make perfect in learning any

foreign language. So our qualification work set its task to find out the most appropriate and easy-to-understand ways for improving the mentioned tasks.

One more problem is the analysis of teaching the skills of good listening and memory training at schools. It seemed to us actual because of the reason that our qualification work is thought to be applied at schools and colleges previously. In this item we gave the examples of methods used by the American universities.

Having analyzed the question studied we could get the following results:

- 1) The problem of right translation both from receipted and accepted languages can be solved by the applying of the formulae $SI=L+M+P$.
- 2) Good listening skills are achieved by means of training exercises.
- 3) Development of modern informational technologies forces us to pay much attention to studying the problem of listening and memory training.

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