

THE CIRIN BULLETIN

Conference Interpreting Research Information Network

An independent network for the dissemination of information on
conference interpreting research (CIR) and related research

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*A contribution was also received from **Tinka Reichmann (TR)***

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This Bulletin aims at contributing to the dissemination of information on conference interpreting research (CIR) and at providing useful information on CIR and related research worldwide. It is published twice a year, in January and July. For further information and electronic copies of early issues no longer posted on the [CIRIN site](#), please contact [D. Gile](#).

Notes:

1. The mini-abstracts may be followed by the initials of the contributor who sent in the information, but the text may also be written or adapted from the original text by DG, who takes responsibility for the comments and for any errors introduced by him.
2. The editor believes in the usefulness in CIR of a distinction between ‘tactics’ (decisions and actions aimed at achieving an immediate goal) and ‘strategies’ (decisions and actions with some planning) – see *CIRIN Bulletin* n°50, July 2015 – and therefore makes this distinction in abstracts and comments written by him. In quotes, the authors’ terminology prevails. The same applies to the distinction between ‘cognitive load’ and ‘cognitive effort’, ‘cognitive effort’ being the effortful response to cognitive load.

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EDITORIAL

The editor is happy to announce a new Node for Germany, Prof. **Tinka Reichmann**, who was a Professor of Translation Studies at the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil and who is now at the University of Leipzig. Her interest and contribution to our collective endeavor is most welcome.

Remote Simultaneous Interpreting and auditory health

Unsurprisingly, RSI, which seems to have changed the conference interpreting landscape in depth with little hope for a return to the green valleys of the ‘golden age’, is generating more and more research. Some of it has to do with the new working environments and associated issues (and opportunities), but serious health issues have been found to be associated with RSI. **Karen Twidle**, staff interpreter at OECD Paris, has prepared a 71-page document which reviews existing research on the potential adverse health impacts of RSI on interpreters, in particular due to the generalized use of compressed

sound. <https://aiic.fr/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/2022-rsi-risks-intepreters-compendium.pdf>. Major institutional European recruiters of conference interpreters seem reluctant to adapt working conditions to such health hazards, and at the time of writing, a wide strike is ongoing among interpreters working for European Union institutions to obtain such adaptation.

Inclusion criteria again

The CIRIN network was launched in 1990 (at the time, under the name IRTIN) for the purpose of providing information on research into interpreting across silos and other barriers to help break the isolation which caused researchers in various parts of the world to be unaware of each other's work. Over the years, the reports started to incorporate some evaluative comments as well, plus occasional editorial and even 'didactic' (short) texts for beginners.

This also led to some questioning about what to include in the *Bulletin*. More specifically, should only 'good' research texts be included? The editor does not consider he has the authority to determine on his own what should count as good research and what should not, or to set some kind of qualitative threshold, but he felt that some texts approved as MA or graduation theses or published as articles or book chapters were seriously flawed as research texts. Were they to be included? In some cases, the decision was more or less taken out of his hands: when material was abundant and the deadline tight, he had to choose, and texts that he considered very poor and unlikely to make a genuine contribution in IS were not included. At other times, new material is scarce. As a result, not only can less recent texts be included, but so can some texts of uncertain scholarship quality, provided they contribute some interesting information, if only the existence of research on interpreting in countries where very little has been reported so far, or information of the kind that would rarely find its way into a published research text and which could be used by colleagues in their own research. Unavoidably, there is arbitrariness in such decisions.

Once again, I should like to draw the attention of colleagues to Master's theses (and occasionally BA theses) which, while generally being their author's first step towards research with associated limitations, are also an indicator of some interest in research into interpreting in countries and universities where no such interest was reported previously. More interestingly, perhaps, some of the students have access to languages which most readers of the *Bulletin* do not master and are thus able to report in a Western language on research and personalities that are not well-known in the 'West'. There are a number of examples in this issue – I suspect that the informativeness of many of these theses owes much to the thoroughness of their supervisors, a prime suspect being Franz Pöchhacker in the case of Viennese theses.

Statistics

No statistics are presented in this issue, because the number of entries on conference interpreting is too small. However, I have signaled entries that I consider noteworthy for one reason or another with the >>> mark.

Daniel Gile

CIR PUBLICATIONS

ARTICLES

Amos, Rhona M.; Seeber, Kilian; Pickering, Martin J. 2022. Prediction during simultaneous interpreting: Evidence from the visual-world paradigm. *Cognition* 220 (2022) 104987

** Basically, the content of Amos's doctoral work (see Bulletin n°63). Professional conference interpreters and professional translators listened to English sentences and interpreted them in the simultaneous mode while looking at a visual display of 4 objects, one of which was highly predictable as the sentences unfolded, or was phonologically similar in English or French. Eye-tracking showed eye movements towards the predictable object before the corresponding noun was uttered by the speaker, but no prediction of the form of the nouns was detected. There were no differences in the prediction patterns of interpreters and translators.*

Błaszczyk, Pawel & Hanusiak, Dariusz. (Jagellonian University of Kraków). 2010. The Choice of Language for Note-taking for Consecutive Interpreting: A Polish Perspective. *Kääntämisen ja tulkkauksen tutkimuksen symposiumin verkkojulkaisu Electronic proceedings of the KäTu symposium on translation and interpreting studies 4* (2010). 1-10.

**A contribution to the ancient debate about the choice of language for note-taking. Not an empirical or theoretical study, but reflections on the use of 3rd languages (not the source language or the target language), in this case Swedish or Finnish for Polish interpreters working between English and Polish. The authors found themselves using words and abbreviations from their C language, Swedish and Finnish respectively, Swedish having the advantage of brevity, and Finnish, rather surprisingly because of the length of much of its vocabulary, of suffixes that can indicate modality with just 3 letters appended to verbs. Regardless of these specific examples, to which I (DG) could add the example of my own note-taking with the use of some Japanese characters, it is interesting to note that prescriptive rules about note-taking do not necessarily take into account the whole diversity of situations in the field – neither is there evidence in the literature that this or that way of taking notes systematically produces higher quality performance in consecutive.*

>>>CHEUNG, Andrew K. F. (Hong Kong Polytechnic Univ.). 2022. Listeners' perception of the quality of simultaneous interpreting and perceived dependence on simultaneous interpreting. *Interpreting 24:1*. 38-58.

**For a number of years, Andrew Cheung has been conducting interesting experiments on quality perception using the Hong Kong student environment in clever designs. In this case, he designed two experiments, one onsite and one online, to test whether there was a difference on how interpreting quality was perceived depending on whether the delegates depended greatly or not on it to understand the speakers. In each of the two experiments, Native Hong Kong Cantonese-speaking participants were divided into two groups: one with Russian and one with English as the source language. Both groups listened to the same prerecorded simultaneous interpretation into Cantonese performed by a non-native (Chinese) interpreter. In the onsite setting, the group listening to interpretation 'from Russian' gave the non-native-accented interpretation more favorable ratings than the group listening to the same interpretation 'from English'. This suggests that in onsite settings, perceived dependence on SI may lead to more favorable (or tolerant) reception of interpreting. In the remote interpreting condition, the difference between the two groups disappeared. Cheung speculates on the reasons for this lack of a difference in the off-site condition and reels in cultural and political aspects relevant to Hong Kong. Interesting.*

*DG: The idea that the delegates' dependence on interpreting would affect their perception of its quality was one the hypotheses put forth when analyzing the reactions of delegates, both French and American, at a medical conference held in France. Gile found that Americans gave more favorable ratings than French delegates, and hypothesized that either they were generally more generous, or it was their dependence on interpreting into English in a French-speaking environment that caused them to be more generous towards the interpretation. (Gile, Daniel. 1990. L'évaluation de la qualité du travail par les délégués : une étude de cas. *The Interpreters' Newsletter n°3*. 66-71).*

Darias-Marrero, Agustín (Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria). 2020. El estrés en situaciones de interpretación: un estudio comparativo entre interpretación de conferencias e interpretación para los servicios públicos. (Stress in interpreting settings: a comparative study of conference interpreting and public service interpreting). *Rocznik przekładoznawczy* 15. 117-138.

* *An analysis of stress-inducing factors in press conference interpreting vs health care interpreting. The author reviews the two settings in general, and then conducts semi-structured interviews and (?) a questionnaire survey about stress-inducing factors. The methodology is only described in vague terms. The author's conclusions are that "there are no major differences in the level of stress experienced" in the two settings, but stress-inducing factors are not the same. In particular, conference interpreters are worried about public exposure of their performance, while public service interpreters experience more emotional stress. The topic is interesting, and deserves solid exploration.*

FAN, Damien Chiaming (National Taiwan University), **Collart, Aymeric & CHAN, Shiao-Hui** (National Taiwan Normal University). 2022. When two languages are competing. An ERP study of sentence processing in expert and novice interpreters. *Interpreting* 24:1. 1-37.

* *The brain responds electrically to stimuli (the 'response' is 'evoked' by 'events'). EEG picks up such responses as voltage fluctuations (in electricity, the concept of 'potential' is closely linked to voltage) using electroencephalography (EEG) through electrodes placed on the scalp. Certain voltage fluctuation patterns have been found to be associated with certain cognitive function. One of them is called N400 because it is 'negative' in electrical terms and peaks at around 400 ms after stimulus onset. When people respond to verbal statements, its amplitude is larger when there is some semantic contradiction between what a verbal context leads them to expect and what unfolds later in the statement. Another pattern linked to unfulfilled prediction of this type is the so-called 'post-N400 positivity' or PNP which appears at around 600 ms after the critical stimulus.*

In the present study, ERP was used to examine the possibility that experienced interpreters are able to predict upcoming information "more strongly" than less experienced interpreters.

Basically, the authors asked participants listen to pairs of sentences: the first, in Chinese, gave some context that would trigger prediction in the second. The second was either in Chinese as well or in English (the 'language switch' condition) and had at its end a noun which was either in line with the prediction induced in the first sentence ('congruent') or unexpected. (For instance, a sentence about the weather being uncertain, followed by a sentence reminding someone not to forget her umbrella – or her passport). Participants had to decide whether sentences were "acceptable" or not by pushing one of two buttons. Both the rates of correct responses and reaction times were measured.

There were three groups of participants: active conference interpreters with some experience, recent graduates of conference interpreter training programs, and first-year graduate interpreting students.

Behavioral results were similar in the three groups, with higher correct decisions in congruent sentence pairs and faster reaction times in the congruent condition and in the condition without language switching, but a difference was observed in the ERP signals in the no-language switch condition during 500-700 ms.

The authors speculate on possible interpretations of the data.

DG: The actual prediction, meaning making inferences about what is yet to come, is not measured in this study. Rather, it is inferred from the fact that when the final word is heard, the brain signals are different depending on whether it is in line with what seems 'logical' or somewhat unexpected in view of the context. I am grateful to Prof. FAN and Prof. CHAN who gracefully and patiently replied to my questions about this study and beyond.

>>>**Ghiselli, Serena** (University of Bologna). 2022. Working memory tasks in interpreting studies. A meta-analysis. *Translation, Cognition & Behavior* <https://doi.org/10.1075/tcb.00063.ghi> Published online: 1 July 2022.

**This paper presents the findings of a meta-analysis of 14 systematically selected studies (articles, though other text forms were also considered) that compares the performance of interpreters and interpreting students with the performance of non-interpreters in four types of cognitive tasks as reported in the literature: reading span, n-back task, listening span and dual tasks. Interpreters show a significant medium size WM advantage as compared to non-interpreters in tasks based on verbal stimuli, but not in tasks based on non-verbal stimuli. Moreover, differences are larger when there is a wider gap in interpreting expertise between groups.*

DG: Studies on working memory in interpreting are often discussed in the literature review part of individual studies, but such overviews should not be confused with a systematic meta-analysis such as this one. As Ghiselli points out in the 'background and motivation' section of this paper, so far, two meta-analyses are known in cognitive interpreting studies, both from 2019. What is striking in this third study are the systematic step-by-step procedure followed by the author and her clear explanations of the various components of her methodological approach. This is valuable, especially for readers (most readers?) who are not familiar with many statistical tools and may not learn much from their sole names as mentioned in other publications. Ghiselli's explanations not only make it easier to understand what she did and why she did it, but also have didactic value. An example to be followed.

>>>**Gumul, Ewa and Bartłomiejczyk, Magdalena** (University of Silesia in Katowice). 2022. Interpreters' explicating styles A corpus study of material from the European Parliament. *Interpreting* <https://doi.org/10.1075/intp.00081.gum> | Published online: 2 June 2022.

**While corpus studies allow the analysis of large amounts of naturalistic data, this very fact seems to induce scrutiny of group behavior which can mask (sub-)group patterns and individual variability. It so happens that in small naturalistic and experimental studies, inter-individual variability is often found to be high. Since real-life interpreting situations in a given language combination most often involve single interpreters interpreting one or a small number of speakers, such variability can be very meaningful in practical terms, and failing to detect it in research is self-limiting.*

For this reason, this study, which looks at the individual behavior of interpreters from authentic corpus material, is most welcome. Here, the authors looked at explicitation in an English-Polish European Parliament corpus. They studied the explicitation behavior of 12 Polish A interpreters in the two directions, taking advantage of voice recognition software to identify the same interpreters interpreting different speeches. The authors expected to find similarity in explicitation in a group of professional interpreters working together in the same setting, cooperating and forming what can be considered a closely-knit 'community of practice'. Their findings suggest otherwise, with high inter-individual variability. Details are provided in the paper.

In their conclusions, the authors rightly suggest that experimental investigations combined with retrospection could lead to further valuable insights. A combination of methods at different stages of the exploration of interpreting-related phenomena is likely to be the best approach in leveraging the advantages of each, while discarding one or another because it has this or that limitation is self-limiting.

HAN, Chao (Xiamen University). 2022. Assessing spoken-language interpreting. The method of comparative judgement. *Interpreting* 24:1. 59–83.

**Comparative judgement (CJ) involves (in this case) global comparisons of pairs of interpretation performances and deciding which is superior. Combining CJ of many interpretations by many judges, HAN found the method reliable and valid in establishing the position of each (student) interpreter on a scale going from lowest to highest performance.*

Hodáková, Soňa (University of Constantinus the Philosopher, Nitra, Slovakia). 2019. Einfluss der Motivationsrichtung auf die Qualität und Stabilität der Dolmetschleistung (The influence of motivation direction on the quality and stability of interpreting performance). *TRANSLATOLOGIA* 1/2019. <http://www.translatologia.ukf.sk/2019/07/einfluss-der-motivationsrichtung-auf-die-qualitat-und-stabilitat-der-dolmetschleistung/>

** A pilot study on the influence of motivational intensity and orientation on the quality and stability of the simultaneous interpreting performance of students interpreting longish speeches. Two types of reactions to anxiety are considered: one in which performance is enhanced by higher levels of anxiety, and one in which performance deteriorates under higher levels of anxiety. Effects were found as regards the amount of information rendered in the target speech, the quality and the stability of the student's interpreting performance.*

DG: Clearly a topic which deserves attention when considering training approaches.

Hodáková, Soňa (University of Constantinus the Philosopher, Nitra, Slovakia). 2021. Motivational Structure and the Interpreter's Personality. In Šveda (ed.). *Changing Paradigms and Approaches in Interpreter Training. Perspectives from Central Europe*. New York and London: Routledge. 185-208.

**A study on the effect of different types of motivation (as defined by psychologists in relevant work) on students' interpreting performance.*

*DG: Also see **Hodáková** 2019 micro-reviewed above.*

HUH, Jiun (Ewha Woman's University, Seoul). 2021. Market demand for conference interpreting. Key factors for recruiting decisions in South Korea. *Forum* 19:1. 24-48.

**Based on semi-structured interviews with 14 conference interpreting clients.*

HUH, Jiun (Ewha Woman's University, Seoul). 2021. Market Demand for Conference Interpreting in South Korea: Sifting through the Signals. *Translation & Interpreting* 13: 1. 71–100.

**A questionnaire-based survey of 109 participants who have experience using conference interpreting services. The results indicate that quality of interpreting, domain-specific interpreting experience, and certification of interpreting competence are important 'signals' (information that convinces employers of the qualifications of candidates for employment), but academic degrees in interpreting are found to have relatively weaker signaling power in spite of the fact that most conference interpreters in Korea graduate from two-year graduate programs at highly selective universities. Respondents also value an "interpreting as a service" approach, based on an end-to-end service concept in both training and practice.*

KUANG, Huolingxiao & ZHENG, Bingham (Durham University). 2022. Note-taking effort in video remote interpreting: effects of source speech difficulty and interpreter work experience.

*PERSPECTIVES*2022, AHEAD-OF-PRINT, 1-21 <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2022.2053730>

**Twenty professional interpreters and 29 student interpreters consecutively interpreted an English speech (their B language) into Chinese (their A language) remotely while-being eye-tracked and monitored by digital pen while they were taking notes. For eye-tracking purposes, they had to look at the screen, not their hands or notes, while taking notes (!). The speech contained two easy segments and two difficult segments. Indicators of cognitive effort were mean fixation duration (MFD) and revisit count (RVC). Ear-Pen span (EPS) was also measured – it could be interpreted as indicating cognitive effort, but can also generate cognitive load and effort downstream. Click count (CC) was the number of strokes when writing notes. It is easy to understand and interpret as a (somewhat approximate) indicator of physical effort when writing in Chinese or Japanese, but perhaps less clear when writing in alphabetic languages.*

Contrary to the authors' expectations, the professionals devoted more attention and effort to note-taking and used a higher proportion of language notes and full words and less abbreviations and symbols than the students. More attention and efforts were devoted to the easy segments than to the difficult segments. There was a positive correlation between the attention and efforts devoted to note-taking and interpreting quality scores for easy segments, but not for difficult segments, which the authors interpret as stemming from cognitive overload. The authors believe their findings lend some support to the Tightrope Hypothesis as regards consecutive interpreting.

>>>**LIU, Yguang; Hintz, Florian; LIANG, Junying; Huettig, Falk.** 2022. Prediction in challenging situations: Most bilinguals can predict upcoming semantically-related words in their L1 source language when interpreting. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1366728922000232>

**Undergraduate bilingual native speakers of Dutch were asked to interpret Dutch sentences of the form 'De man (verb) op dit moment een (noun)' ("The man (verb) at this moment a (noun)" into English while looking at a display of 4 distinct objects. The verbs and nouns were varied. Each target noun was made either predictable or nonpredictable by the verb at the beginning of the sentence. Their eye movements were tracked. In one experiment, they were asked to translate the sentence after listening to it. They completed the interpretation earlier (but the difference was not significant) in the predictable condition. Also, in the predictable condition – but not in the nonpredictable condition, the likelihood of looking at the target object named by the noun (out of the 4) increased well before it was mentioned, at around one second before the onset of the target word in Dutch. But accuracy rates were slower. In a second experiment, other participants were asked to interpret the sentences while listening to it. Seven out of the 41 participants did not look at any of objects displayed on more than 25% of the trials, and 4 participants focused on one or two fixed positions on the screen. They were excluded from the subsequent analysis. Again, there was a faster interpretation in the predictable condition, but the difference was non-significant. Again, accuracy was significantly lower in the predictable condition. As in the first experiment, in the predictable condition, looks to the target word increased in the predictable condition only, starting about 1 second prior to the target noun onset.*

In their discussion, the authors conclude that prediction took place while listening to the source sentence, but that such prediction probably had some cost in attentional resources, which led to loss in accuracy. They also consider possible explanations of the fact that under the simultaneous condition, several participants did not look at the target object. Prediction might not be taking place because of the added cognitive pressure of simultaneous, or it is taking place but is not manifest through eye movement.

The authors are aware of the difference between the type of material used and real-life interpreting situations.

LIU, Yubo & ZHANG, Wei (Beijing Foreign Studies University). 2022. Exploring the predictive validity of an interpreting aptitude test battery. *Interpreting* <https://doi.org/10.1075/intp.00078.liu> | Published online: 1 April 2022

**Scores in a battery of interpreting aptitude tests comprising the SynCloze test, the Negative Affectivity Scale and the Inventory of Learning Styles implemented at the beginning of 4 post-graduate interpreter training programs for 68 students were compared with assessments of their performance in Chinese-English and English-Chinese consecutive at the end of the first semester. The SynCloze test proved to have some predictive power in both consecutive interpreting directions.*

**DG: Thinking of selective conference interpreter training programs, a number of questions arise: 1. Cognitive skills and language mastery as they are reflected in consecutive interpreting performance often evolve markedly over one or two years. Is it a good idea to look at performance after one semester only?*

2. How practically useful are tests that explain less than 50% of the variance? Is it a good idea to decide whether to admit a student or not on such a basis?
3. In selective conference interpreter training programs in most countries, many students have atypical background and many classes have a small number of students (often less than 10), and class interactions, which modulate morale and motivation, can vary markedly. Under such circumstances, a statistical approach may not be very powerful, perhaps less so than subjective assessments by experienced trainers. This hypothesis needs to be checked, of course.

MA, Xingcheng; LI, Dechao; HSU, Yu-Yin Hsu (Southeast Univ., The Hong Kong Polytechnic Univ.). 2021. Exploring the impact of word order asymmetry on cognitive load during Chinese–English sight translation. Evidence from eye-movement data. *Target* 33:1. 103-131.

** Twenty-five MA students of translation from a Hong Kong university sight-translated Chinese sentences displayed on a monitor into English. Some could be translated in the word order of the original, and some could not (parallel or non-parallel sentence structures). Some were embedded in a context, and some were isolated. The students' eye movements were recorded to examine cognitive load during sight translation, the indicators being dwell time and number of fixations for sentence-based analysis, and duration of the first fixation and duration of first fixation and of regression path for word-based analysis. The results show: (1) There was a significant effect of word order differences on overall cognitive load as indicated by the considerably longer dwell times and more frequent fixations for the non-parallel sentences, but it was only during the later processing stage that structural dissimilarity exerted a strong influence on local processing in terms of first fixation duration and regression path duration; (2) the role of context in offsetting the structural difference effect was very limited; and (3) although reordering may place a greater burden on working memory, most participants preferred reordering over chunking and translating segment by segment in the same order as in the source language to cope with the different structures.*

>>>Mraček, David & and Mračková Vavroušová, Petra (Charles University Prague). 2021. Self-Reflection Tools in Interpreter Training. A Case Study Involving Learners' Diaries. In Šveda (ed.). *Changing Paradigms and Approaches in Interpreter Training. Perspectives from Central Europe*. New York and London: Routledge. 229-247.

** While this study was done with 20nd year undergraduates as opposed to more advanced students training to become conference interpreters, the consecutive interpreter training stages, the tools used and the findings make it relevant for conference interpreter training as well. Actually, the findings from the students' diaries (which was made a course requirement) reflect quite well the reactions of students in conference interpreter training program where the editor (Gile) has taught. Students write about stress at failing to complete the tasks successfully, about their fear of public speaking and a turn for the better when they overcame it, about positive reactions to active listening exercises and short consecutive without notes, about the distracting effect on listening of note-taking, about problems with the legibility of their notes. When told to also practice on their own, they feel that this has helped them progress, and they were satisfied with an exercise consisting in interpreting the same recorded speech more than once, as they could see their progress from one iteration to the next. Thus, interpreting diaries seem to be useful for both students and trainers. One might add that as a source of information on the students' perceptions of difficulties and progress, they could be useful for research as well.*

>>>Przepiórkowska, Danuta (University of Warsaw). 2021. Adapt or Perish: How Forced Transition to Remote Simultaneous Interpreting during the COVID-19 Pandemic Affected Interpreters' Professional Practices. *Między Oryginałem a Przekładem* 54:4. 137-159.

** A survey about the effects on Polish conference interpreters of the forced transition to remote simultaneous interpreting (RSI). An online Google Forms questionnaire was designed and invitations*

to complete it were sent to members of three Polish Conference Interpreters Facebook groups and to targeted individual interpreters in mid-January 2021. 132 responses were received. Contrary to expectations, 54% of the respondents did have some previous experience interpreting from home, and 30% of them reported previous experience of interpreting from home via Internet involving both audio and video signals. 73% of the respondents participated in organized RSI training. 58% let existing clients know that they were adding remote interpreting services to their portfolio. 88% felt that RSI was here to stay. More than a fifth saw RSI as not just problematic, but also a new business opportunity. 52% had a positive, open attitude towards incorporating RSI into their regular practice, 22% rejected it, and 32% accepted it grudgingly. Thought-provoking.

Taibi, Davide; Bianchi, Francesca (Italy); Kemkes, Philipp Kemkes ; Marenzi, Ivana. (Germany) 2019. Learning Analytics for Interpreting. In *Proceedings of the 10th International Conference on Computer Supported Education (CSEDU 2018)*, pages 145-154. DOI: 10.5220/0006774801450154
**The description of a system that comprises a glossary tool, with fields that need to be filled out by interpreters, and a tracking tool which records all navigation by the students on the Internet and thus helps trainers to see how the students progress and give them methodological advice.*

YAGURA, Haruko; TANAKA, Hiroki; KINOSHITA, Taiki; WATANABE, Hiroki; MOTOMURA, Shunosuke; SUDOH, Katsuhito; NAKAMURA, Satoshi (Nara Institute of Science and Technology). 2021. Selective Attention Measurement of Experienced Simultaneous Interpreters Using EEG Phase-Locked Response. *Speech and Language* Volume 15, Article 581525. doi: 10.3389/fnhum.2021.581525.

**Seven experienced interpreters and 15 less experienced interpreters (“Beginners”) were asked to either shadow or simultaneously interpret 60 second extracts of texts from NHK radio news in the presence of a steady 40-Hz auditory steady-state response while their EEG signals were being monitored for later analysis. The results of the analysis suggest that task difficulty and years of experience impact the attention modulation of 40-Hz ASSR.*

YAN, Kun & SONG, Zhongwei (Macquarie Univ., Sydney). 2021. Making Sight Translation Dynamic: Eliciting Summarization as a Strategy for Simultaneous Interpretation. *T&I Review* 11:2. 7-28.

**The authors realize that simultaneous interpreting is a cognitively taxing task and that students have difficulty learning it. They cite cognitive load theory, according to which initial training with learning tasks that represent the full complexity of an authentic task can hardly succeed, because the complexity can easily overload learners’ cognitive system..., thus negatively affecting learning, performance and motivation. In response to the challenge, they thought of using time-constrained sight translation as a preparation for simultaneous interpreting: instead of having students sight-translate from a constantly available written text, they had them translate from successive text segments on screen that follow each other and either fade or disappear from screen at different paces, depending on the learning stage, which made backtracking difficult and put the students under variable time pressure. The authors also stressed the usefulness of summarizing as a tactic and focused on the use of this tactic by the students. This exploratory method, which they call DST for ‘dynamic sight translation’ was used over one semester for three succeeding years, with fine-tuning based on feedback from the students. The students’ reactions were positive, but no effect on simultaneous interpreting performance was detected, apparently because cognitive pressure was too high for summarizing under the stringent time constraints.*

DG: The authors chose a method which involves visual processing of text instead of auditory signals, which is somewhat questionable in the case of interpreting. There are other ways to reduce cognitive pressure and prepare students for simultaneous, ways which have been used over decades in many

interpreter training programs, e.g. having the students listen to the speech before simultaneously interpreting it, or having them do a consecutive of the speech before interpreting it.

>>>**ZHAO, Nan** (Hong Kong Baptist University). 2022. Speech Disfluencies in Consecutive Interpreting by Student Interpreters: The Role of Language Proficiency, Working Memory, and Anxiety. *Frontiers in Psychology* Vol. 13 Article 881778 (May 2022).

**Fifty-three 4th year student interpreters who already had one year of training in interpreting interpreted consecutively 2-to-5 sentence extracts from an American-English speech into their native Mandarin, and their output disfluencies were correlated with language proficiency, working memory and anxiety (as measured by a questionnaire). Anxiety correlated significantly with disfluencies, while working memory and language proficiency scores did not.*

DG: The link provided for additional material did not work, and no details are provided regarding the actual length distribution of the speech segments, but assuming a sufficiently large number of segments were long enough to require note-taking, the consecutive was 'true consecutive' as defined by conference interpreters. What is interesting about this study is that it shows the effect of anxiety in terms of performance. According to Eysenck et al.'s attentional control theory of anxiety (2007), anxiety increases stimulus-driven attention and decreases goal-oriented attention. Since the interpreting classroom environment can generate much anxiety, this would suggest that students' performance in the classroom may not reflect the performance level they could attain on the basis of their cognitive skills, and steps to curb their anxiety could be an important educational tool.

One puzzling part in this paper is the idea that "in consecutive interpreting, a speaker delivers a segment of speech (varying from one to a dozen sentences) and the interpreter needs to quickly transcode the source language (e.g., words, syntactic structure) into the target language, which they keep in their working memory (or on a note); then, when the speaker pauses, they output the target language as fluently and accurately as possible to an audience." The idea of translating mentally the source speech into the target language as soon as it is heard is diametrically opposed to the idea, favored by conference interpreters in most of the world and formalized in Seleskovitch's highly influential Interpretive Theory, that in interpreting, source speech segments are used in order to construct a mostly non-verbal representation of their meaning, and rewording that meaning in the target language only comes in later, at the reformulation stage. This is assumed to help formulate the target speech in a more spontaneous way, with less language-interference. Is this principle not followed by the students in the sample? Moreover, one of the distinctive features of working memory is its very limited storage capacity. How could students keep in WM a target-language utterance of several sentences?

ZHAO, Nan; CHEN, Xiaocong; CAI, Zhenguang (Hong Kong). 2022. Planning ahead: Interpreters predict source language in consecutive interpreting. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1366728921001097>

** The authors asked graduate students of English with training or experience in interpreting to read (online) for recall or read for later translation sentences with predictable or less predictable elements that were presented to them on screen, words in the sentences following each other by pressing the space bar. They measured reaction time. The authors found that participants were more likely to engage in lexico-semantic prediction when reading to later interpret. Also, that the enhanced prediction in reading to interpret disappeared when cognitive load was high, suggesting that SL prediction in interpreting requires cognitive resources. They conclude with the suggestion that, when cognitive resources are sufficient, interpreters engage in enhanced linguistic prediction in SL comprehension to facilitate the delivery of interpreting.*

DG: *Interesting. But what does this tell us about what happens in consecutive interpreting, when listening (not reading, and certainly not reading on a self-paced word-b-word basis) to a speech (not isolated sentences) composed by a speaker for communication purposes?*

Ziobro-Strzpek, Joanna. 2013. Simultaneous Interpreting: Walking a Tightrope. *Studia Anglica Resoviensia* ZESZYT 69/2011. 377-391.

**The author, a conference interpreter herself, was interested in the Effort Models, and in particular in the Tightrope Hypothesis and the Imported Cognitive Load Hypothesis. An experiment with Polish graduate students of conference interpreting studying at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan. A group of novices had had 6 months of training, and a group of advanced students had had 15 months of training at the time of the experiment. Participants were asked to interpret a political speech from English into Polish and from Polish into English and to immediately retrospect while listening to a recording of their interpretation. Errors were reported to have occurred mostly due to processing information from previous segments. The shift of cognitive load onto the adjacent segments was also caused by hesitations and self-corrections which gave rise to delays in the production of the target speech. Reportedly, several examples of shifts due to slow retrieval of words from long-term memory also led to errors in segments which were delivered slowly and seemingly were not intrinsically difficult. Hesitations and self-corrections were among the most frequently mentioned causes of lag, subsequent imported load and errors.*

DG: *A welcome empirical corroboration of the effects of imported cognitive load, albeit on students only. Unfortunately, no specific data was provided, apparently due to space restrictions. But the basic methodology seems sound, and replications, if only through case studies, would make it possible to learn more about the effects of imported cognitive load.*

Also note that the author suggests adding to the existing Efforts a 'Suppression of Irrelevant Thoughts' Effort (p.380). The idea that irrelevant thoughts, and especially thoughts triggered by anxiety, can occupy valuable space in working memory, is a good one. Doing away with them can be beneficial. It also makes sense that if aware of such parasitic thoughts, interpreters could occasionally make a willful effort to chase them away. But it is not clear to me how this would work as a full-fledged Effort among those that are intrinsic to the interpreting process and more or less continuously active.

M.A. AND GRADUATION THESES

Gazarian, Diana. 2012. *Gorbatschows Dolmetscher. Fallstudie zur Dolmetscherrolle anhand zweier Memoiren.* MA thesis, University of Vienna.

**A biographical/historical contribution, about Pavel Palazchenko and Igor Korchilov, two diplomatic interpreters who worked for Gorbachev in the 1980s. The thesis is based on their memoirs as well as on interviews with them. According to their reports and in contradiction with the official role of diplomatic interpreters as conduits, they were sometimes consulted by both their Soviet employers and foreign personalities and edited speeches. The thesis also provides interesting information about the background and training of Soviet diplomatic interpreters and indicates that they were considered diplomats, albeit low rank diplomats, and could move from interpreting positions to other types of positions.*

Göttl, Stefanie. 2010. *Das Simultandolmetschmodell von A. F. Schirjajew.* (Shiryaev's simultaneous interpreting model). MA thesis, University of Vienna.

**Shiryaev was one of the pioneer conference interpreting researchers and conference interpreter trainers of the Soviet Union back in the 1970s (he taught at the Military faculty for foreign languages, which later became the faculty of foreign languages of the Minister of Defense's Military University –*

and was a colonel, and later a major-general at his university). His PhD, apparently defended at the end of the 1950s, was supervised by Miniar-Beloruhev, and apparently, none of his publications were translated from Russian into any other language. In this thesis, Göstl describes the beginnings of Soviet interpreting research, with a focus on the process Model of simultaneous interpreting developed by Shiryayev, distinct from Chernov's model, which was developed around the same time. For Shiryayev, simultaneous interpreting consists of three phases, a so-called orientation phase, followed by a transformation phase, followed by a control phase. The orientation phase, the most critical one, includes listening and deciding on a certain direction for reformulation. The orientation phase also determines the interpreter's lag behind the speaker. According to Göstl, Shiryayev's monograph *Синхронный Перевод (Simultaneous interpreting)*, published in 1979, is his most significant contribution. It is also the central focus of her thesis. The first part of the monograph is a description and analysis of simultaneous interpreting, including its cognition process, and the second and last part offers recommendations for training. Göstl describes the beginnings of Soviet research into interpreting as involving much interaction with psychology and linguistics, in stark contrast to the take-off period of Western interpreting research as led by Seleskovitch (what Gile calls 'The practitioners' period'). This is corroborated in Kubes' account (see her 2013 thesis micro-reviewed below).

Grabbi, Lili. 2010. *The repercussions of native and non-native English accents on perceived quality and comprehension in conference interpreting.* MA thesis, University of Tartu.

**This study is original in that its author, who is a native speaker of English living and working in Estonia, hypothesizes on the basis of her own experience that in interpreting settings, outputs in native English will be more highly valued than outputs in non-native English, but may well be less comfortable as regards comprehension. She asked groups of listeners with various degrees of mastery of English to listen to two interpretations, one into native English and one into ELF, to answer comprehension questions and to assess the accents as native or non-native and state their preferences. The design had very little control in it, and the findings were inconclusive, at least as regards generalizability, but the starting author's experience and her beliefs, as well as some technical points she makes about the perception of ELF vs English as a native language, are interesting and deserve more exploration, in particular against the background of the ever-recurring debate about directionality.*

>>>Kubes, Tina. 2013. *Die Dolmetschwissenschaftlerin Ivana Čeňková: Leben und Werk.* (The life and achievements of Interpreting Scholar Ivana Čeňková). MA thesis, University of Vienna.

**This thesis offers interesting information about a central personality in the world of interpreter training and research in Prague and beyond, along with interesting information about early years in the investigation of interpreting in the former 'East'. Čeňková, a professional conference interpreter, educator and scholar, was one of the few in the 1970s and 1980s to gain real acquaintance with both Soviet and Western interpreting theory: she had good knowledge of both Russian and French and spent time in both Moscow and Paris at a time when Chernov and Seleskovitch were in the full swing of their research and training-related activities. Unfortunately, most of her publications were written in Czech and were never translated into Western languages, so that her naturalistic empirical work and surveys on interpreting quality have remained mostly unknown in the West. This thesis, based to a large extent on an interview and also on the analysis of Čeňková's dissertation and some papers, is a good opportunity to get acquainted with her work – for readers who understand German.*

Sattlegger, Victoria. 2020. *Sprachliche Interferenzen beim Simultandolmetschen. Eine sprachübergreifende, empirisch-deskriptive Analyse* (Linguistic Interference in Simultaneous Interpreting: A cross-language descriptive analysis). MA thesis, University of Vienna.

* *Transcripts of examples of excerpts from official German interpretations of Dutch and Spanish speeches in a plenary session of the European Parliament were shown to assessors who were asked to rate their linguistic acceptability. There was more interference from Dutch source texts, but the errors seemed to be less severe than those stemming from interference from Spanish speeches.*

Winkler, Susi. 2015. *Symbole in der Notation beim Konsekutivdolmetschen.* (Note-taking symbols in consecutive interpreting). MA thesis, University of Vienna.

**In this thesis, the author asks a small sample of students at her University what symbols they use in their note-taking and where they take them from, in particular with reference to reference textbooks on note-taking. Perhaps the most interesting part of the text is the extensive review of the literature on note-taking in consecutive, which mentions inter alia Miniar-Belorutchev in the Soviet Union as the author of a text offering symbols and an undated text by Wilfried Becker (Becker, Wilfried. undated. Notizentechnik. Gernersheim: BBK).*

DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS

Al-Zahran, Alladin. 2007. *The consecutive conference interpreter as intercultural mediator: a cognitive-pragmatic approach to the interpreter's role.* Doctoral dissertation, University of Salford.

**More than two thirds of the body of this dissertation are devoted to a review of the literature on very general aspects of conference interpreting, and then more specifically on the interpreters' role and on various types and procedures of what the author considers 'cultural mediation'. Al-Zahran reports briefly the views of many authors from the literature, and sometimes makes his own comments on these views. The empirical part is a 15-question electronic questionnaire on intercultural mediation, to which 295 responses were received, mostly from AIIC members. No piloting was done, and the questions are very general (e.g. Do you think that cultural differences, cultural gaps, or culture-specific references can constitute obstacles, difficulties or breakdowns to successful communication? If your answer to the above question is 'Yes', do you think that this difficulty becomes greater when the source and target cultures are perceived to be too distant? Consecutive interpreters play the role of intercultural mediators because they deal not only with languages, but also with cultures – completely true/partly true/completely false. Do you think that the consecutive interpreter can perform intercultural mediation while still remaining faithful to the meaning of the original? Do you think that the consecutive interpreter as intercultural mediator should faithfully interpret information even when he/she does not agree with what the speaker is saying? Do you think that intercultural mediation means going beyond establishing understanding between speaker and audience?). Responses are analyzed holistically, with descriptive statistics.*

Al-Zahran could have gone further into the analysis through in-depth interviews and focus-groups.

Ayan, Irem. 2019. *Alienated tongues: emotional labor and sabotage in conference interpreting.* Doctoral dissertation. Binghamton University, State University of New York.

* *Ayan, who is originally from Turkey, analyzes negative feelings and reactions which arise in interpreters when they must interpret statements they oppose ideologically or morally and when they are not treated with respect by clients and by users of interpreting services. For her analysis, she uses introspection on her own professional experience as well as semi-structured interviews with 21 interpreters. She quotes passages from the interviews when discussing several points. She considers that they "sabotage" work when they fail to abide by the ideal normative image of the neutral interpreter.*

DG: *The issues Ayan describes probably occur regularly or frequently in certain public service settings and in certain Middle-Eastern countries, but are they part of the daily life of conference interpreters in general?*

Also, as regards sexism and the sexualization of female bodies, they are found in many if not all professions. The last chapter is interesting to read, but contributes nothing new. I have heard and read many similar stories about women in the workplace in other positions. Incidentally, throughout my career, I have seen many female chief interpreters, many female interpreters in positions of power in the marketplace, many female interpreters with a strong personality, and clients treated them with respect... or else! Unlike female executives in large corporations, who did earn less than their male counterparts and were not treated equally well in other respects.

HAN, J. E. . 2013. *‘sayongja kwanjŏmŭi t’ongyŏk p’umjil p’yŏngga yŏn’gu - t’ongyŏk eijŏnsi ōmmu tamdangjarŭl chungsimŭro’* [A study of the quality assessment in interpreting from the user’s perspective – Focused on the managers of interpreting agency] (PhD thesis). Retrieved from http://www.riss.kr/search/detail/DetailView.do?p_mat_type=be54d9b8bc7cdb09&control_no=06b5a1bbff81006effe0bdc3ef48d419&outLink=N

**The reference was found in HUH’s 2021 paper ‘Market Demand for Conference Interpreting in South Korea: Sifting through the Signals’ (see articles section), but I have no access to the dissertation and do not have any details.*

WANG, Ruiyuan. 2020. *The Effect of Study Abroad Experience and Working Memory on Chinese-English Consecutive Interpreting Performance.* Doctoral dissertation, Western Sydney University.

**Twenty-five graduate students from 3 Chinese Universities and 25 comparable Chinese students studying in Australian universities with at least one year of stay-abroad duration were recruited for tests exploring the potential effect of stays abroad and of Working Memory (as measured by an English Reading Span task) on various linguistic mastery parameters on the consecutive interpreting performance from English into Chinese and vice-versa of speech segments of a bit over 2 minutes (as assessed holistically by professional NAATI assessors). The results support the idea of a link between Reading Span WM and consecutive interpreting performance, and partially support the idea that students with stay-abroad experience outperform those without it.*

DG: *To this reviewer, one striking aspect of this study is the centrality of language mastery issues in its whole design, and apparently in the way the author views interpreting. This view contrasts sharply with the traditional AIIC-centered view of conference interpreters as having acquired full mastery of their working languages before even being admitted to training programs. It is only fair to acknowledge that WANG does not claim to do a study on conference interpreting students, though they might well be, but the topic of the effect of a stay-abroad is very relevant to conference interpreter training as well. But the author does refer to the literature on conference interpreting, and in particular to cognitive models of conference interpreting, and overall does not seem to make a clear distinction between ‘interpreting’ and ‘conference interpreting’. This observation is not meant to be critical, and is taken up in (a slightly) more extensive discussion elsewhere in this issue. Actually, though the language mastery of student interpreters who are admitted into highly selective AIIC-approved training programs is probably much better than Wang’s participants, linguistic weaknesses are still common in other parts of the world as well.*

ZHAO, Liuyin. 2021. *Simultaneous Interpreting with Text: A Study in the Context of the United Nations.* Doctoral dissertation. Vienna University.

**The author’s aim was to explore differences in the output of simultaneous interpreters depending on whether they use the text from which the speaker is reading or not.*

A preliminary field observation was done while the author was in a dummy booth at a UN conference in Vienna. During this conference, she did not have the opportunity to interview the working interpreters (p. 53). In 2019, having worked for UN entities as a freelance interpreter, she took advantage of an assignment at a UN conference in Geneva, she observed what was going on in her (Chinese booth). She also interviewed 12 colleagues informally (p. 77 ff).

She also gradually built a corpus of 41 recordings of original English speeches and their simultaneous interpretations into Chinese with and without texts (p. 86) by a total of 4 interpreters. From her dummy booth, she could identify read-out speeches by looking at the delegates. Nineteen speeches were interpreted by two of the four interpreters with text. Since the author's intention was to compare SI with and without text, she could only include the remaining 22 speeches, interpreted by the two other interpreters, with and without text (p.104). Only 2 out of these 22 were interpreted without text, and only one, interpreted by one interpreter, was selected for the comparative analysis. In her single-assessor analysis, ZHAO found that this interpreter's output had different characteristics depending on whether the interpretation was done with or without text. In particular, sub-optimal lexical choices were more numerous when interpreting with text, and this was often associated with literal ('form-based') renditions. In SI with text, there were also more pauses of different kinds, but not more self-corrections and sub-optimal intonation and 'modality'. There were fewer small omissions, but more major omissions, in particular, when the interpreter fell behind and missed the speaker's deviations from the text (p. 133).

In a distinct part of her work, ZHAO conducted a web-based experiment in which she asked Chinese engineers, researchers, experts and people holding managerial positions in the space-related sectors, the area in which the relevant corpus was built, about their experience with and expectations from SI, and requested their blind assessment of four short (slightly below 1 minute or slightly below 30 seconds) interpretation extracts, 2 of SI with text and 2 of SI without text (p. 145 ff). Fifty-two questionnaires were received, 25 of which were fully completed, and 27 partly completed. Overall preferences showed a slight advantage for SI without text in one pair, but not in the other.

Regarding the features of SI with or without text, articulation rate was more regular in the latter. DG: In this thorough, systematic work, the author took great care of ecological validity. Her findings are in line with ideas well-known in interpreting circles. However, for objective reasons that have to do with the environmental constraints of empirical research into conference interpreting, her comparison of SI with or without text turned out to be a case study, with findings that cannot be generalized. Her web-based experiment was commendably well prepared, but it is not clear to what extent reactions to interpreting segments less than 1 minute-long presented out of a communication context reflect the users' reactions to real-life interpreting in conferences which they attend to gain information and perhaps to exchange with the speakers and with other delegates.

Another illustration of the fact that as regards interpreting, even good work does not necessarily deliver clear-cut, generalizable, innovative answers.

ZHAO, Yafen. 2021. *Take it or leave it? Notationstechnik beim Konsekutivdolmetschen Chinesisch-Deutsch. (Take it or leave it? Note-taking in Chinese-German consecutive interpreting).* Doctoral dissertation, Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz.

**This dissertation was published as a book in 2022. See the books section below.*

BOOKS

Stachowiak-Szymczak, Katarzyna. 2019. *Eye Movements and Gestures in Simultaneous and Consecutive Interpreting.* Springer: International Publishing.

**The published version of the author's 2016 doctoral dissertation (see Bulletin n°58, 2019).*

>>>Šveda, Pavol (ed.). 2021. *Changing Paradigms and Approaches in Interpreter Training. Perspectives from Central Europe*. New York and London: Routledge.

**A collection of 12 chapters by authors from Central-European countries (Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia focusing on interpreter training. Most of them report on the historical evolution and present status of interpreter training in the authors' respective countries, and some on training methods. See the articles section for micro-reviews of several of the chapters. The book is informative and interesting, inter alia as it highlights a clear shift from conference interpreter training towards public service interpreter training. Several authors of chapters in the book are basically conference interpreters, but are clearly aware of the importance of public service interpreting and are involved in training public service interpreters even if they do not work as public service interpreters themselves. This is a profound change from most of the 2nd half of the twentieth century, where the prevailing norm was that only (conference) interpreters were supposed to teach (conference) interpreting.*

ZHAO, Yafen. 2022. *Take it or leave it? Notationstechnik beim Konsekutivdolmetschen Chinesisch-Deutsch. (Take it or leave it? Note-taking in Chinese-German consecutive interpreting)*. Berlin: Franck & Timme.

**This is the published version of the author's doctoral dissertation defended under the same name at Johannes Gutenberg Universität Mainz in 2021. It is structured in two parts: a systematic review of the literature on note-taking in consecutive interpreting, both general and specific to interpreting with Chinese, and a part which describes language-pair specific differences between German and Chinese (including culture-related verbal expression), with some comments on how this affects note-taking in the German-Chinese combination in one direction or another. There is no empirical investigation of theoretical development in the book, which is based on what other authors have said and presumably on the author's personal observations.*

Gile, Daniel. 2021. *Basic concepts and models for interpreter and translator training* [통번역 교육을 위한 기본 개념과 모델] (이미경, Trans.; Vol. 1). HUINE.

https://books.google.co.kr/books?id=OIG7zgEACAAJ&dq=%ED%86%B5%EB%B2%88%EC%97%AD+%EA%B5%90%EC%9C%A1%EC%9D%84+%EC%9C%84%ED%95%9C+%EA%B8%B0%EB%B3%B8+%EA%B0%9C%EB%85%90%EA%B3%BC+%EB%AA%A8%EB%8D%B8&hl=en&sa=X&redir_esc=y

**A Korean translation of the revised version of the book (2009), translated by LEE Mikyung*

... AND BEYOND CONFERENCE INTERPRETING

SIGNED LANGUAGE INTERPRETING

Articles

Stachl-Peier, Ursula (University of Graz, Austria). 2021. Sign Language Interpreting and Community Interpreting – Collaboration and Mutual Gains. In Šveda, Pavol (ed.). *Changing Paradigms and Approaches in Interpreter Training. Perspectives from Central Europe*. New York and London: Routledge. 64-84.

**This chapter in Šveda's edited collection provides inter alia information about interpreter training at the University of Graz, along with a brief summary of major events in the training of signed language interpreters in Austria. It highlights the fact that in Austria, signed language interpreters seem to have*

organized professionally earlier than public service interpreters and that they have led the way, that contacts between spoken-language public service interpreters (“Community interpreters” in the author’s words) have taken off thanks to the Critical Link conferences. The author also makes the point that SLI can make important contributions to TIS.

>>>**Wehrmeyer, Ella** (North-West University, South Africa). 2022. Psycholinguistic errors in signed simultaneous interpreting. *Interpreting*. <https://doi.org/10.1075/intp.00074.weh> | Published online: 24 February 2022

** In a corpus of 10 English News Broadcasts interpreted simultaneously into African Sign Language by two highly qualified CODA interpreters, the author used Levelt’s cognitive steps/levels in speech production from comprehension, through conceptualization, (mental) formulation, morphological encoding and (physical) articulation to analyze the 1 942 ‘psycholinguistic errors’ (roughly slips of the tongue in spoken language production) she detected. She found that most slips involved lemma selection, followed by articulation and conceptualization (syntactic planning), that there were significantly more production errors than comprehension errors, and that errors do not increase over time which, she says, suggests they are a result of cognitive overload rather than fatigue.*

DG: Yet another interesting contribution by Wehrmeyer, both for its innovative angle of analysis and for its findings. Besides my personal satisfaction at her use of a psycholinguistic model to inform the more holistic and less technical Effort Models (p. 23) which she seems to consider a convenient framework for analysis around cognitive load, I note that her data suggest that production is more problematic than comprehension, at least for the two CODAs in her sample, and that cognitive load, not fatigue, seems to be the main trigger of interpreting errors – in contradiction with the conclusions of a study which are still cited in spite of flawed design and questionable conclusions drawn from the data.

Theses

Du Toit, Petri. 2017. *Mitigating the Cognitive Load of South African Sign Language Interpreters on National Television*. MA thesis, University of the Witwatersrand.

**Actually, a more general thesis on TV signed language interpreting and its challenges, with a special focus on cognitive challenges. The study relies on a questionnaire, on interpretations of an English speech into South African Sign Language without preparation and then with preparation by 6 interpreters, and on subsequent semi-structured interviews. While preparation strategies were also observed, since the same speech was apparently interpreted twice, the changes observed (improvements) are probably due partly to preparation, but may be due to the most part by the learning effect, since interpreters already interpreted the speech once and had thus become familiar with the speaker, the speaking style and the content of the speech. Preparation methods noted in the thesis are very similar to preparation methods found in spoken language conference interpreting preparation.*

Zachová, Zuzana. 2013. *Model úsilí Daniela Gila a jeho aplikace na simultánní tlumočení projevů nasycených vlastními jmény. Porovnání dvou jazykových kombinací: francouzština čeština a český znakový jazyk – čeština*. (Daniel Gile’s effort model and its application on texts containing nouns. Comparing two language pairs: French – Czech and Czech Sign Language – Czech.). MA thesis, Charles University, Prague.

**This thesis sought to verify the applicability of Daniel Gile’s Effort Model on two language pairs, French – Czech and Czech Sign Language – Czech. In an experiment, the author looked at how segments which contained proper nouns and the following speech segment were interpreted or not. Fourteen advanced interpreting students and two professional interpreters took part in the experiment.*

Proper nouns turned out to be problem triggers indeed, as often, they were not correctly rendered and/or the following speech segment was not correctly rendered (which is in line with the imported load hypothesis). This held true for both the French-Czech combination and the Czech-Czech sign language combination.

Doctoral dissertations

Arcambal, Emeline. 2022. *L'interprète en langue des signes en milieu pédagogique : adaptabilité, enjeux, éthique, tactiques*. Doctoral dissertation, Université Paris 3 – Sorbonne Nouvelle.

**The author analyzes two naturalistic corpora and information derived from two focus groups. In one corpus (studied in the framework of a Master's thesis completed in 2016), 5 interpreters (including the author herself) interpreted into French Sign Language (LSF) for a Deaf trainee at a literacy training program intended for language enhancement for professional settings where all other trainees (11 of them) were foreigners. Out of 35 video-recorded hours, 4 were analyzed, and the interpreters were interviewed. In the second corpus, A 2-hour session of a higher education class in biochemistry interpreted by the author and another interpreter for a Deaf student was video-recorded and analyzed. She could not conduct a post-interpreting interview with the other interpreter. Two focus groups with 7 and 4 interpreters respectively were organized at a second stage to see whether the participants' ideas about educational interpreting converged with the data extracted from the two corpora.*

A few noteworthy findings:

Many interaction gestures between the Deaf student and the interpreters were observed, most of which aiming at confirming in one direction or another that interpretation was understood, that a sign used by the interpreter was OK, or that the student understood a sign being finger-spelled before the fingerspelling was completed, presumably to save time and maximize information recovery through interpretation. There are also many microgestures indicating that the student had not understood, in which case the interpreter reformulated the interpretation in a different way or repeated the previous interpretation more slowly – in which case, about 55% of the time, the next speech segment was omitted.

Many comments made by the interpreters are cited verbatim in the dissertation, and this provides useful cues about the interpreters' views and motivation when acting in particular ways.

In some cases, in the first corpus, foreign participants in the French literacy course said something which the interpreters could not understand because of poor accent or poor grammar, and yet the interpreters did not ask them to repeat what they were saying – in order not to make them feel bad about their French. Similarly, when they noted the Deaf student was not really paying attention, they kept interpreting in order to avoid drawing the teachers' attention to the fact, and thus contributing to the student's exclusion from the class of the Hearing. In both cases, the interpreters' tactical decisions are motivated not by linguistic, cognitive or communicational factors in the strict sense, but by human considerations.

Through a lot of observational and analytical work, including identification and counting of tactics and obtaining many explanations from the interpreters through interviews and focus groups (basically a very sound method), Arcambal confirmed findings from other studies about role perceptions, tactical and other decisions that are not necessarily in line with formal professional codes of conduct.

Archambeaud, Florine. 2022. *Vers un modèle des espaces en interprétation du français vers la Langue des Signes Française*. (Modeling spaces in French-into-French Sign Language interpreting). Doctoral dissertation, Université Paris 3 – Sorbonne Nouvelle.

**The title of this second doctoral dissertation from members of ESIT's signed language interpreting section, which suggests it is about constructing a model of (signing?) space is misleading. Signing*

space is mentioned in a small part of the dissertation, but there are also analyses of the physical space in which media interpreters work, and the term is also used in a metaphorical sense to refer to the interpreter's social environment – including “economic space”, “communication stakes space”, “contextual space”, “collaboration space”, “political space”, a term which I never managed to understand from the context. There is one chapter on the interpreter's role, the description and analysis of an authentic corpus taken from media interpreting during a pre-presidential debate, a chapter describing and analyzing the actions of signed language interpreters during a live onsite public encounter sponsored by a gaming manufacturer. At the end of the dissertation, there is an attempt to model interpreting with ‘spatial’ building blocks and various social and professional environmental factors.

Besides corpus analysis, there is retrospection in the form of an online focus group with 12 interpreters, interviews, and much interesting information can be gathered from these transcripts. As regards signing space, one interesting observation (p.60ff) is that its construction during media interpreting was found to be quite different from the rules/norms assumed to be standard in the literature on spontaneous signing. A possible explanation is that when expressing themselves spontaneously, signers can construct their space at their leisure. When interpreting, to avoid lagging behind and missing information because of working memory saturation, interpreters need to start constructing their space before having the whole picture, so they place certain entities in certain positions and sometimes find themselves caught in a uncomfortable situation, when they realize from the unfolding source speech that these positions are not ideal because new entities come in and have to be placed as well.

Many interesting points are raised, including sexism against female interpreters, but most of her observations are not new. Archambeaud might have been able to go further had she taken the trouble of reading and analyzing the abundant existing open access literature on signed language interpreting available at the price of a few mouse clicks.

Books

Roy, Cynthia B; Brunson, Jeremy L.; Stone, Christopher A. 2018. *The academic foundations of Interpreting Studies: An introduction to its theories*. Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press. *This book is about the contribution to interpreting studies of 5 established disciplines (history, linguistics, sociology and anthropology, social psychology, cognitive psychology) and one less solidly established discipline, namely “Translation Studies”, to Interpreting Studies. It was authored by three scholars from Signed Language Interpreting Studies (SLIS), and though it does cover spoken language IS to a moderate extent, its focus is understandably on the world of signed language interpreting. The book is written for undergraduate and 1st year postgraduate students to introduce them to disciplines that provide (“impose” – p. vii) theoretical frameworks and methodologies for the academic study of interpreting. It shows convincingly, with examples, why each of the disciplines addressed are relevant to SLIS. The social and psychological disciplines are also relevant to spoken language community/public service interpreting studies – less so to spoken language conference interpreting. Interestingly, the authors consider Translation Studies one of the disciplines that contribute to Interpreting Studies, but do not say that like Interpreting Studies, Translation Studies was built on other disciplines, and in particular Literary Studies and Cultural Studies. One theoretical input that has been and is still influential in Interpreting Studies is what Gile called “Personal Theories” in a 1990 publication: *Scientific Research vs. Personal Theories in the Investigation of Interpretation*. What he referred to was the development of theories on the basis of the observation of and reflection on the practice of translation and interpreting, essentially without the academic input of other disciplines (hence the name ‘Personal Theories’). The authors of the Handbook might have made the point,

perhaps in the beginning of the book, that while such *Interpreting Practice-Based Studies* did produce some influential theories (Seleskovitch's 'Interpretive Theory' is perhaps the best-known theoretical outcome of this type of research), the input of more established disciplines helps them gain depth and credibility in the academic world.

OTHER INTERPRETING RELATED PUBLICATIONS

CUI, Ying (Shandong University). 2022. How plagiarism passes peer review. Reflection on a handbook editor's experience. *Interpreting* 24:1. 140-146.

**Explanations by one of the co-editors of a collective volume which contained a plagiarized chapter on how this happened in spite of the rigorous implementation of peer-reviewing procedures. Basically, in TIS, it is difficult to find available and conscientious peer reviewers with sufficient familiarity with the relevant TIS branch. It is difficult to find a human solution to the problem. Technological solutions are technically possible, through algorithms that would detect publications with sufficient similarities to manuscripts submitted for publication to alert editors and trigger human action. Several systems are already available. But this would require publishers to agree to make available to a huge database all their texts, which raises many other questions, in particular as regards non-disclosure and the protection of copyrights.*

Note that the unavailability of conscientious and highly knowledgeable peer reviewers for all branches of TIS also affects the quality of the assessments of doctoral works. See the short text at the end of this issue.

HU, Bei (National University of Singapore). 2022. Trust to thrive. On academic publishing in interpreting and translation studies. *Interpreting* <https://doi.org/10.1075/intp.00079.hu>

**In this "discussion", the author responds to CUI's 2022 text on How plagiarism passer peer review (see above), which she discusses critically. She follows up with a discussion of the importance of 'trust' on a solid basis.*

DG: HU's points are well taken, and ideally, following her aspirations should lead to an improvement in the situation, and in particular to an improvement in the level of scholarship found in TIS. There is however a real problem in the discipline with limited availability of technically competent, conscientious and unbiased peer reviewers. I wonder if there is any practical solution at this time.

Granholm, Eric; Asarnow, Robert F.; Sarkin, Andrew J.; Dykkes, Karen L. 1996. Pupillary responses index cognitive resource limitations. *Psychophysiology* 33:4. 457-461.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8986.1996.tb01071.x>

** In this study, measurements of 22 undergraduate students' pupillometric response to a digit-span recall task under three cognitive load conditions: low (up to 5 digits per string), moderate (up to 9 digits per string) and very high ("excessive") pressure of 13 digits per string are presented and discussed. Pupillary responses increased along with processing load until a maximum of about 7 digits, at which point they reached an asymptote, and then declined, beyond 9 digits. This suggests that pupillary responses increase as long as processing load stays below attentional resource limit, change little around this limit, and then decline beyond it.*

**DG's comment: these interesting results cast doubts on the adequacy of pupillometric measurements to test the Tightrope Hypothesis (see Seeber, 2011) which, by definition, refers to cognitive pressure levels that are close to the maximum cognitive capacity of the interpreters or beyond it.*

Kotait, Radwa Mohammad. (Ain Shams University, Egypt). 2019. Conceptual Processing in Simultaneous Interpreting: A Cognitive Model of Mental Operations in the Interpretation of Three Speeches by President El-Sisi. *Occasional Papers* 66:A. 441-494.

**The author claims to explore the construction of meaning during simultaneous interpreting of three speeches in Arabic by Egyptian President El-Sisi into English, 2 of them by a first interpreter and one by a second interpreter. He does so using Prágerová's 2012 model of simultaneous interpreting (I hope to get access to the dissertation in which she explains her model), which he uses as a descriptive tool addressing problem triggers, processing strategies and mental operations. Transcripts of extracts from the speech in Arabic and of their rendition in English are provided, along with a speculative description of the reasons why certain translation solutions were chosen. In many cases, Kotait attributes shifts to imported/exported load. It is a pity that no immediate retrospection was available, as opposed to speculative explanations.*

LI, Xiangdong. 2015. International visibility of mainland China Translation Studies community: A scientometric study. *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology* 23:2. 183-204.

**The author looks at the visibility of Mainland China TIS scholars' international visibility on the basis of articles published in 13 international TIS journals and the SSCI and A&HCI databases from the 2005 to 2013. Indicators are publication counts, citation analysis, editorial board composition. According to the author, the international visibility of Mainland China scholars is low with respect to all indicators. LI analyzes the reasons for such low visibility.*

DG: Interesting. I wonder whether a similar analysis would yield similar conclusions now, close to a decade later. Another question. Also, as regards conference interpreting, Chinese scholars have been gaining visibility spectacularly over the past two decades, something which is quite obvious when looking at the successive issues of the CIRIN Bulletin. I also wonder whether an analysis based on indexed TS journals with relatively high ranks and on mainland Chinese authors is the best way to assess international visibility of Chinese authors in the eyes of TIS scholars, as opposed to institutional authorities. Even the distinction between mainland authors and other Chinese authors, which probably makes sense in terms of mainland Chinese policy, makes less sense when considering the regular exchanges, including meetings and common initiatives between authors from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, as well as Chinese authors who are now in Australia, in the UK and elsewhere.

Mohammed Ahmed Barakat, Eman. 2015. Interpreter education and training in Yemen: A case study. Doctoral dissertation, Universiti Sains Malaysia.

**A detailed investigation of interpreter training in Yemen, more particularly of the undergraduate training program at the University of Science and Technology. The study highlights major problems.*

Rovira-Esteva, Sara; Olalla-Soler, Christian; Franco Aixelá, Javier. 2022. Open access in translation and interpreting studies: A bibliometric overview of its impact (1996-2015). *Meta* 66:3. 505-755.

**Many studies have shown that OA research outputs have greater citation impact as compared to similar toll-access (TA) publications. Other authors claim that they are not conclusive, as many confounding factors have not been addressed. This paper compares the two categories within TIS in a large sample of more than 20,000 TIS-related documents from BITRA, covering a time span of 20 years (1996-2015). OA publications are cited slightly more often than TA documents, but the difference is too small to assess its significance.*

Viljanmaa, Anu. 2020. *Professionelle Zuhörkompetenz und Zuhörfilter beim Dialogdolmetschen* (Listening competence and listening filters in dialogue interpreting). Berlin: Frank&Timme.

**In this publication, Anu Vilijanmaa looks at listening behaviour and professional listening competence in dialogue interpreting, with cues on how one can learn to listen professionally. Listening as a complex process of interpersonal communication includes the percipience and processing of informative signals in addition to the listener's reactions. With help of various authentic examples, the author examines the requirements for listening behaviour, concrete framework conditions, and real-world behaviour of dialogue interpreters. She introduces elements of professional listening competencies and introduces the term "listening filter" into Interpreting Studies. Moreover, the author demonstrates the existence of listening filters and introduces possibilities for handling internal and external listening filters during dialogue interpretation. (TR).*

* * *

'Conference interpreting students' vs. 'interpreting students'

Daniel Gile

When I was initiated to conference interpreting, in the 1970s, the official AIIC doctrine, which was prevalent in AIIC-approved training programs and in intergovernmental organizations, made it clear that access to conference interpreter training programs, preferably at graduate level, was restricted to highly talented and educated individuals who already had 'perfect' or near-perfect mastery of their working languages. If admitted, those who did not were liable to fall prey to 'parroting', that is, to word-for-word translation and therefore to poor interpreting quality. For the same reason, it was deemed necessary to start with consecutive interpreting until the art of taking some distance from the source-speech words and building a mental model of 'deverbalized' sense was mastered before moving on to simultaneous. Programs where consecutive or even simultaneous were taught to language learners did not fit this framework. In terms of training, this was not absurd, at least as regards highly selective conference interpreter training programs that were supposed to 'deliver' graduates ready to work at the highest level after just one or two years of training. But in many parts of the world, interpreters are trained while they are still learning their future working languages, and some (how many?) eventually become top-level conference interpreters. As to simultaneous interpreting, it is taught in signed-language interpreting training programs early on, most often when students still have a shaky knowledge of the relevant sign language. And yet, for important sociolinguistic reasons having to do with the history of Deaf communities worldwide, they are definitely supposed to 'deverbalize'. Moreover, on the basis of my own experience in two different universities (see Gile, 1982 for one of them), undergraduate students of foreign languages who are taught consecutive interpreting as it is taught in specialized conference interpreter training programs often manage to acquire the basic skills without falling prey to word-for-word translation (see also a 2013 doctoral dissertation on the same topic by **Ersöz Demirdağ**, reviewed in *Bulletin* n°46 (2013)).

In other words, while it makes sense to refrain from generalizing on interpreting cognition, tactics and various challenges as encountered by professionals on the sole basis of studies on students, and especially students who are still in intermediate stages of their language acquisition process, investigating processes and challenges among such students could provide clues on the acquisition of interpreting-specific expertise.

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Gile, Daniel. Initiation à l'interprétation consécutive à l'INALCO. *Meta* 27:3. 347-351.

Beginner's corner:

Doctoral committees and research prize assessment committees in TIS

Daniel Gile

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Over the past twenty years or so, I have participated in the assessment of doctoral dissertations for a prize offered to young scholars by the European Society for Translation Studies. Several times, members of the committee found serious flaws in dissertations submitted for the prize. This made us feel uncomfortable: were we saying the doctoral committees that had approved the dissertations had not done their work?

Over the past 30 years or so, I have also participated in doctoral vivas where at least two members of the committee (including myself) thought that major flaws in the dissertations should have disqualified them from the vivas. And yet, they/we did not formally object when the degrees were awarded.

In my view and on the basis of my experience, three related factors can explain sub-optimal performance of doctoral committees, at least in TIS.

One is linguistic and demographic: In some of its branches and sub-branches, TIS still has a very small population of experienced, highly qualified scholars, and for doctoral dissertations written in some languages, there are very few – or none. As a result, members of doctoral (assessment) committees are not necessarily familiar with research done on the relevant topic.

A second factor is institutional: depending on the country and on the university, doctoral supervisors may be required to be faculty members in the university where the student is enrolled, and members of the doctoral committee are sometimes required to be at least partly members of the faculty of other universities ('external' members). Combining this constraint with the small size of the population of researchers in certain branches of TI, this again leads to the recruitment of members with little or no familiarity with the field.

Finally, in many if not most countries, doctoral committee members do the work at the request of the student's supervisor after said supervisor has approved the dissertation. They do it pro bono, as a gesture of friendly cooperation, even if they count on that supervisor's cooperation if/when they need to recruit assessors for their own students. Once they have accepted, they may criticize the dissertation, but saying it is not good enough for submission during the viva is public criticism of the supervisor and is simply not done, at least in my TIS experience.

For all these reasons, at this time, perhaps the best guarantee (which is by no means foolproof) of the quality of a doctoral dissertation in TIS is the combination of scholarly competence in the relevant branch of translation or interpreting and critical approach of its supervisor. In many countries, perhaps in most, we are still struggling to ascertain these conditions are met. But at this time, in TIS, the situation is not quite in line with the ideal of the doctoral degree only awarded to scholars who have truly mastered research skills and have shown genuine expertise in the area which their doctoral work explores. It is not surprising that at committees where members are free to express their true opinion, experts occasionally declare that the Emperor is actually naked whereas in the initial vivas, he was described as dressed in fine clothes.

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